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THE UNCANNY
X-MEN™
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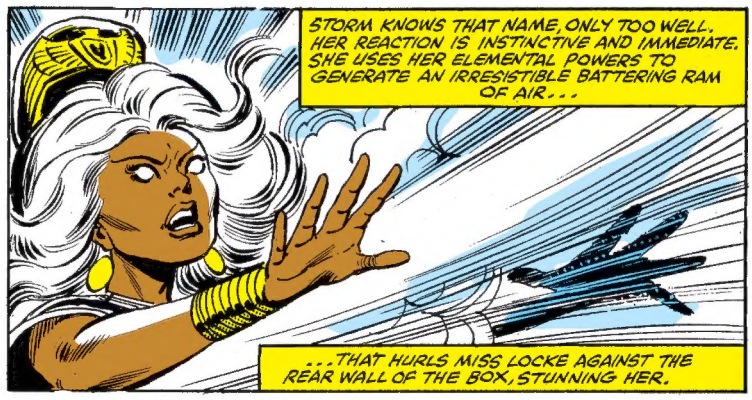
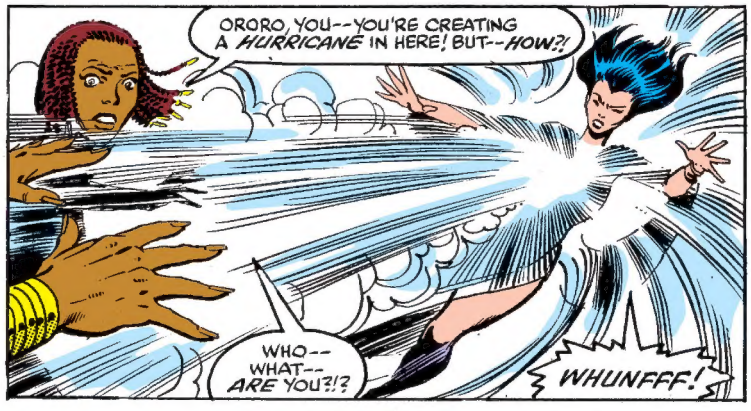
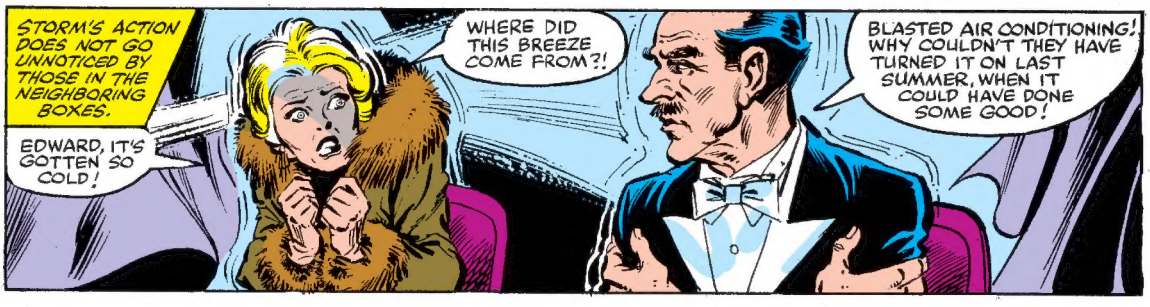
ORIGINALLY, THIS WAS STEVIE'S SPECIAL CHRISTMAS PRESENT FROM KITTY PRYDE--ORORO'S FELLOW X-MAN AND THE NEWEST PUPIL IN STEVIE'S DANCE SCHOOL. BUT KITTY WAS STRUCK DOWN BY A SEVERE ATTACK OF FLU. SHE ASKED ORORO TO TAKE HER PLACE. WITH RESERVATIONS, ORORO ACCEPTED.
THE DANCING IS BEAUTIFUL.
THAT BEAUTY IS THE RESULT OF YEARS OF HARD WORK AND PAIN.
IT'S A HARD LIFE, ORORO, A CRUEL ONE.
AND I'D GIVE MY SOUL TO BE A PART OF IT AGAIN.
THERE'S SUCH SADNESS IN STEVIE'S VOICE, SUCH...LONGING. I WANT TO REACH OUT, TO COMFORT HER--YET SOMETHING HOLDS ME BACK.
GODDESS, WHAT IS WRONG WITH ME?! STEVIE IS A LOVELY WOMAN. KITTY LIKES HER UNRESERVEDLY. WHY CAN'T I?
LOST IN THEIR OWN THOUGHTS--AND CAUGHT UP IN THE PERFORMANCE UNFOLDING ON-STAGE--NEITHER ORORO NOR STEVIE HEARS THE DOOR TO PROFESSOR XAVIER'S PRIVATE BOX OPEN.
THE INTRUDER'S APPROACH IS AS SILENT AS DEATH ITSELF.
AND HER TOUCH IS AS DEADLY.
WHAT--?!
CURTAINS, DROPPING IN FRONT OF THE BOX--CUTTING US OFF FROM THE REST OF THE AUDIENCE!
I BEG YOUR PARDON!

WHO ARE YOU--?!
THIS IS A PRIVATE BOX! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!
I AM MISS LOCKE.
I SERVE ARCADE.


STORM KNOWS THAT NAME, ONLY TOO WELL. HER REACTION IS INSTINCTIVE AND IMMEDIATE. SHE USES HER ELEMENTAL POWERS TO GENERATE AN IRRESISTIBLE BATTERING RAM OF AIR...
...THAT HURLS MISS LOCKE AGAINST THE REAR WALL OF THE BOX, STUNNING HER.


ORORO, YOU--YOU'RE CREATING A HURRICANE IN HERE! BUT--HOW?!
WHO-- WHAT-- ARE YOU?!?
WHUNFFF!

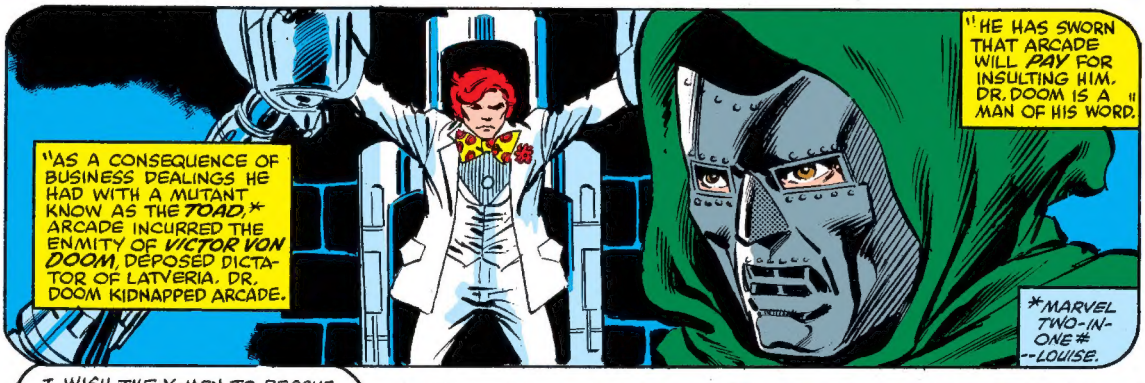

STORM'S ACTION DOES NOT GO UNNOTICED BY THOSE IN THE NEIGHBORING BOXES.
EDWARD, IT'S GOTTEN SO COLD!
WHERE DID THIS BREEZE COME FROM?!
BLASTED AIR CONDITIONING! WHY COULDN'T THEY HAVE TURNED IT ON LAST SUMMER, WHEN IT COULD HAVE DONE SOME GOOD!

WE WILL TALK LATER, STEVIE. I'LL EXPLAIN EVERYTHING.
I HOPE.
THAT WAS A WARNING, MISS LOCKE.
A MOST IMPRESSIVE ONE, STORM. BUT ALSO A WASTED EFFORT.

ORORO, I FEEL... SO... UNNNKHH ...
STEVIE!
I AM NOT IN YOUR POWER, X-MAN.
YOU ARE IN MINE.

NO!
WHEN I TOUCHED YOU AND YOUR FRIEND, STORM, I INJECTED A CONTACT POISON INTO YOUR BODIES, WITHOUT THE ANTIDOTE, YOU'LL BOTH BE DEAD IN MINUTES.
WH-WHY?! WAS ARCADE TOO... FRIGHTENED TO KILL ME IN PERSON?

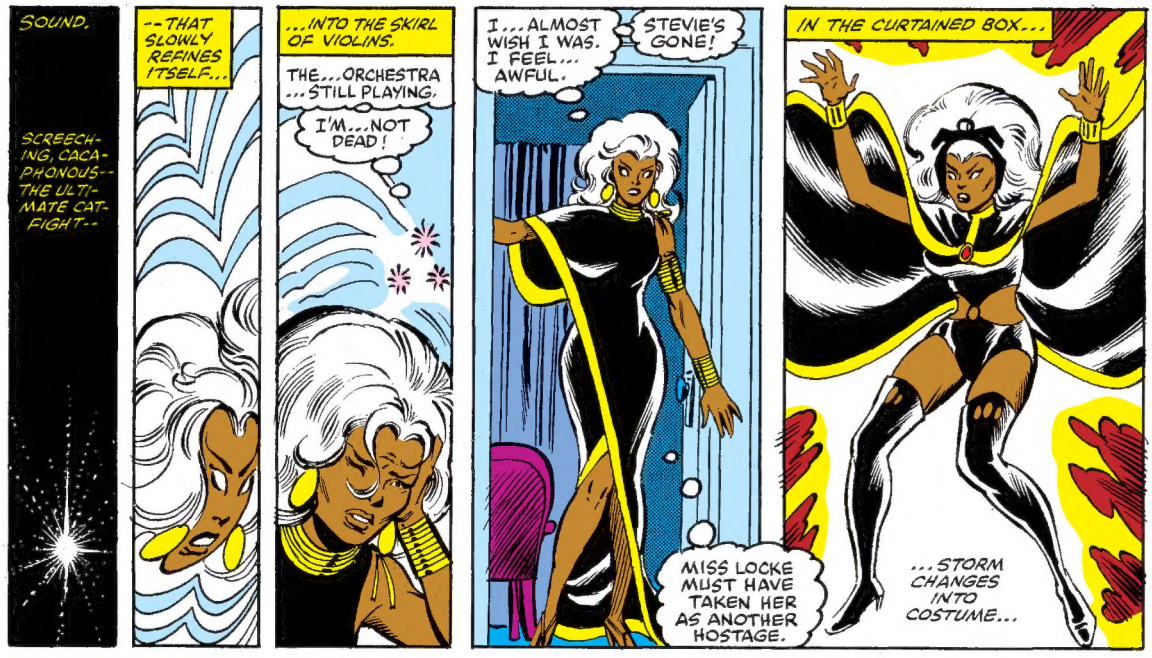
HARDLY. THE POISON WAS MERELY TO ENSURE THAT I HAD YOUR UNDIVIDED ATTENTION--AND TO PREVENT YOUR STOPPING MY DEPARTURE.
ACTUALLY, I'M HERE BECAUSE I NEED THE X-MEN'S HELP.


"AS A CONSEQUENCE OF BUSINESS DEALINGS HE HAD WITH A MUTANT KNOW AS THE TOAD,* ARCADE INCURRED THE ENMITY OF VICTOR VON DOOM, DEPOSED DICTATOR OF LATVERIA. DR. DOOM KIDNAPPED ARCADE.
"HE HAS SWORN THAT ARCADE WILL PAY FOR INSULTING HIM. DR. DOOM IS A MAN OF HIS WORD."
*MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE # --LOUISE.

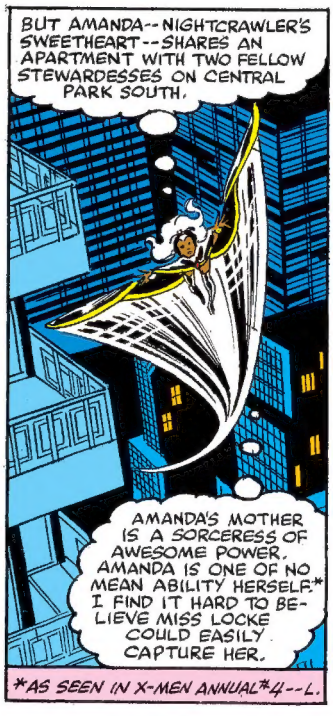
I WISH THE X-MEN TO RESCUE ARCADE, AND TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT VON DOOM NEVER BOTHERS HIM AGAIN. TO GIVE YOU AN INCENTIVE, I HAVE KIDNAPPED THOSE DEAREST TO YOU...

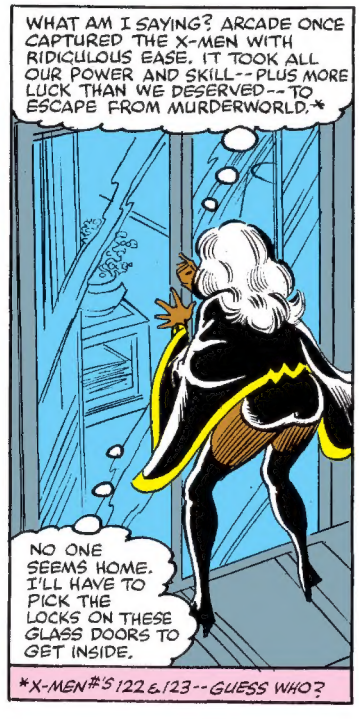
...THE PARENTS OF JEAN GREY, MOIRA MacTAGGERT, CANDY SOUTHERN, AMANDA SEFTON AND ILLYANA RASPUTIN, COLOSSUS' SISTER.
THEY ARE IN MURDERWORLD. FAIL TO FREE ARCADE, STORM, AND THEY WILL DIE THERE.

STORM STRUGGLES TO RISE--BUT A BLINDING SURGE OF PAIN SMASHES HER DOWN, BRINGING A STRANGLED CRY FROM HER LIPS. AN ICY NUMBNESS WASHES THROUGH HER LIKE A TIDAL WAVE AND WITH HER LAST THOUGHT, SHE WONDERS IF THIS IS DEATH?

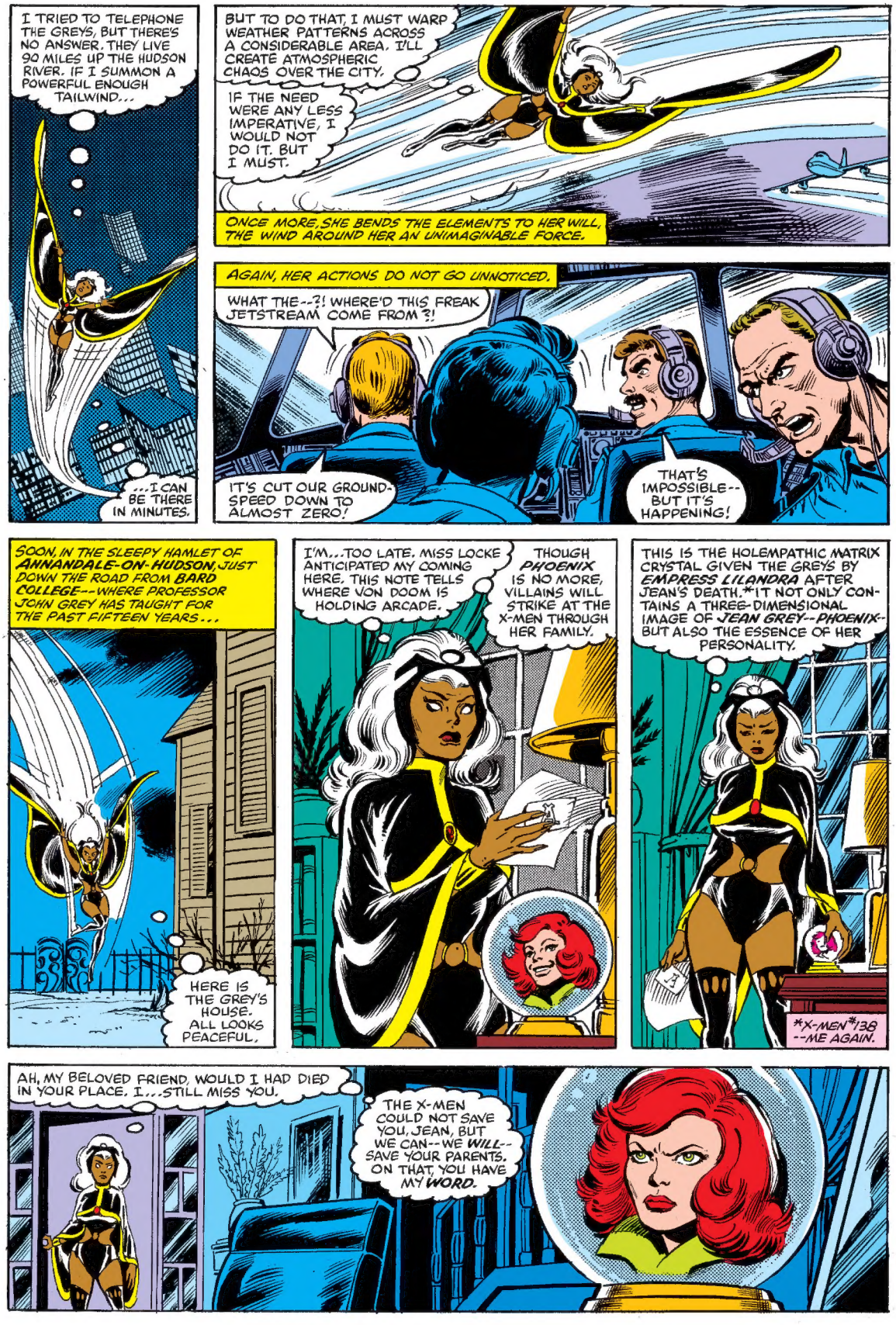

SOUND.
SCREECHING, CACAPHONOUS--THE ULTIMATE CAT-FIGHT--
--THAT SLOWLY REFINES ITSELF...
...INTO THE SKIRL OF VIOLINS.
THE...ORCHESTRA ...STILL PLAYING.
I'M...NOT DEAD!
I...ALMOST WISH I WAS. I FEEL... AWFUL.
STEVIE'S GONE!
MISS LOCKE MUST HAVE TAKEN HER AS ANOTHER HOSTAGE.
IN THE CURTAINED BOX...
...STORM CHANGES INTO COSTUME...

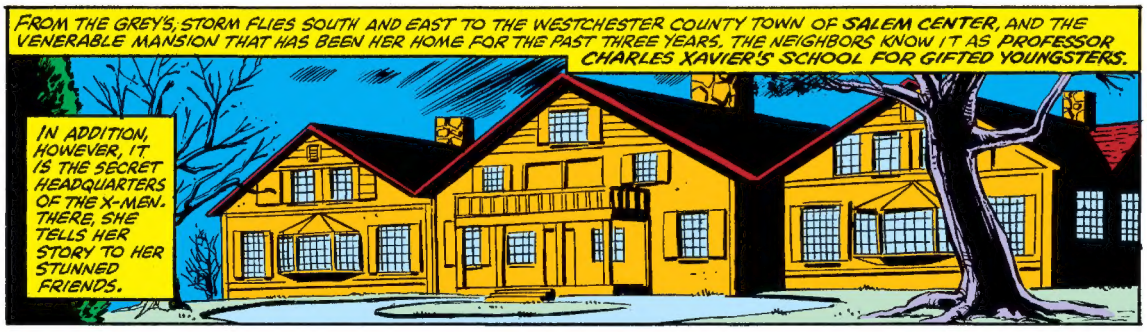
...AND CREATES A WIND THAT CARRIES HER OFF INTO THE CLEAR NIGHT SKY.
SHE SAID SHE'D ABDUCTED THOSE THE X-MEN LOVE MOST. I HAVE TO MAKE CERTAIN SHE WAS TELLING THE TRUTH.
MOIRA IS IN IRELAND, AND LITTLE ILLYANA IN RUSSIA--A BIT OUT OF MY RANGE.

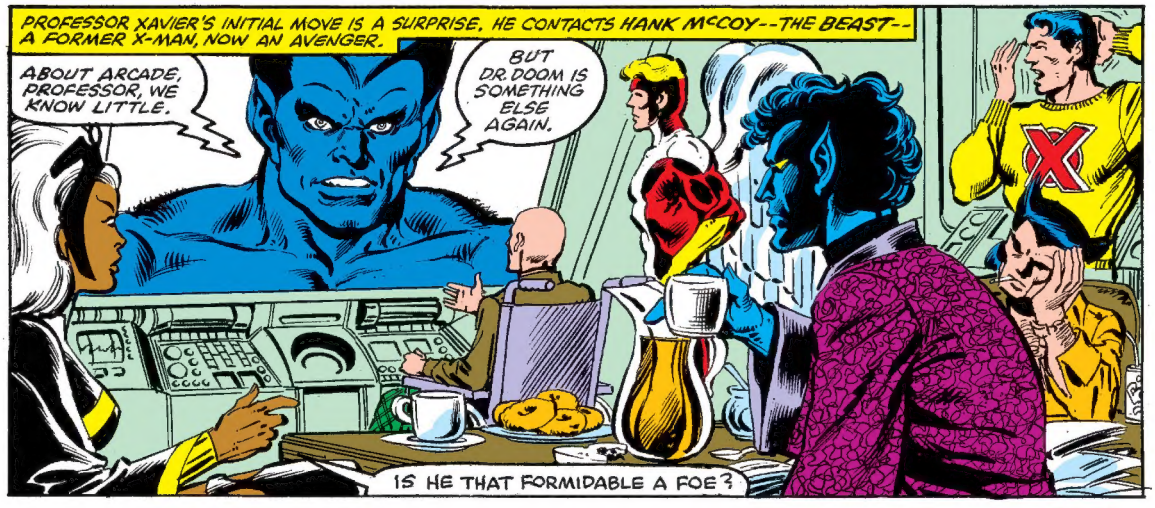

BUT AMANDA--NIGHTCRAWLER'S SWEETHEART--SHARES AN APARTMENT WITH TWO FELLOW STEWARDESSES ON CENTRAL PARK SOUTH.
AMANDA'S MOTHER IS A SORCERESS OF AWESOME POWER. AMANDA IS ONE OF NO MEAN ABILITY HERSELF.* I FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE MISS LOCKE COULD EASILY CAPTURE HER.
*AS SEEN IN X-MEN ANNUAL #4--L.


WHAT AM I SAYING? ARCADE ONCE CAPTURED THE X-MEN WITH RIDICULOUS EASE. IT TOOK ALL OUR POWER AND SKILL--PLUS MORE LUCK THAN WE DESERVED--TO ESCAPE FROM MURDERWORLD.*
NO ONE SEEMS HOME. I'LL HAVE TO PICK THE LOCKS ON THESE GLASS DOORS TO GET INSIDE.
*X-MEN #'S 122 & 123--GUESS WHO?

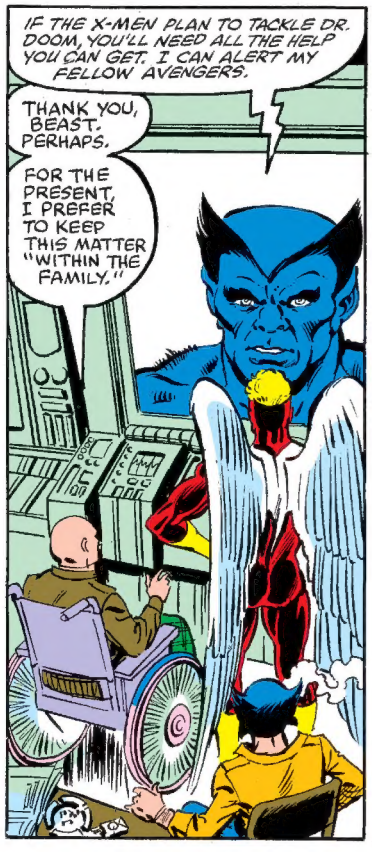
THAT PERFUME--I RECOGNIZE IT FROM THE THEATER. MISS LOCKE WAS WEARING IT. AND, PINNED TO THAT PILLOW--THAT CARD!
OH, AMANDA--NO!


I TRIED TO TELEPHONE THE GREYS, BUT THERE'S NO ANSWER. THEY LIVE 90 MILES UP THE HUDSON RIVER. IF I SUMMON A POWERFUL ENOUGH TAILWIND...
...I CAN BE THERE IN MINUTES.
BUT TO DO THAT, I MUST WARP WEATHER PATTERNS ACROSS A CONSIDERABLE AREA. I'LL CREATE ATMOSPHERIC CHAOS OVER THE CITY.
IF THE NEED WERE ANY LESS IMPERATIVE, I WOULD NOT DO IT. BUT I MUST.
ONCE MORE, SHE BENDS THE ELEMENTS TO HER WILL, THE WIND AROUND HER AN UNIMAGINABLE FORCE.
AGAIN, HER ACTIONS DO NOT GO UNNOTICED.
WHAT THE--?! WHERE'D THIS FREAK JETSTREAM COME FROM?!
IT'S CUT OUR GROUND-SPEED DOWN TO ALMOST ZERO!
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE--BUT IT'S HAPPENING!
SOON, IN THE SLEEPY HAMLET OF ANNANDALE-ON-HUDSON, JUST DOWN THE ROAD FROM BARD COLLEGE--WHERE PROFESSOR JOHN GREY HAS TAUGHT FOR THE PAST FIFTEEN YEARS...
HERE IS THE GREY'S HOUSE. ALL LOOKS PEACEFUL.
I'M...TOO LATE. MISS LOCKE ANTICIPATED MY COMING HERE. THIS NOTE TELLS WHERE VON DOOM IS HOLDING ARCADE.
THOUGH PHOENIX IS NO MORE, VILLAINS WILL STRIKE AT THE X-MEN THROUGH HER FAMILY.
THIS IS THE HOLEMPATHIC MATRIX CRYSTAL GIVEN THE GREYS BY EMPRESS LILANDRA AFTER JEAN'S DEATH.* IT NOT ONLY CONTAINS A THREE-DIMENSIONAL IMAGE OF JEAN GREY--PHOENIX--BUT ALSO THE ESSENCE OF HER PERSONALITY.
X-MEN #138 --ME AGAIN.
AH, MY BELOVED FRIEND, WOULD I HAD DIED IN YOUR PLACE. I...STILL MISS YOU.
THE X-MEN COULD NOT SAVE YOU, JEAN, BUT WE CAN--WE WILL--SAVE YOUR PARENTS. ON THAT, YOU HAVE MY WORD.


FROM THE GREY'S, STORM FLIES SOUTH AND EAST TO THE WESTCHESTER COUNTY TOWN OF SALEM CENTER, AND THE VENERABLE MANSION THAT HAS BEEN HER HOME FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS. THE NEIGHBORS KNOW IT AS PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS.
IN ADDITION, HOWEVER, IT IS THE SECRET HEADQUARTERS OF THE X-MEN. THERE, SHE TELLS HER STORY TO HER STUNNED FRIENDS.


PROFESSOR XAVIER'S INITIAL MOVE IS A SURPRISE. HE CONTACTS HANK McCOY--THE BEAST--A FORMER X-MAN, NOW AN AVENGER.
ABOUT ARCADE, PROFESSOR, WE KNOW LITTLE.
BUT DR. DOOM IS SOMETHING ELSE AGAIN.
IS HE THAT FORMIDABLE A FOE?

IN MAGNETO'S CLASS, AT LEAST. I HEARD OF HIM WHILE GROWING UP IN THE CIRCUS. HIS NAME IS KNOWN AND FEARED THROUGHOUT CENTRAL EUROPE.
EVEN AMANDA'S MOTHER, MARGALI, RESPECTS HIS POWER.

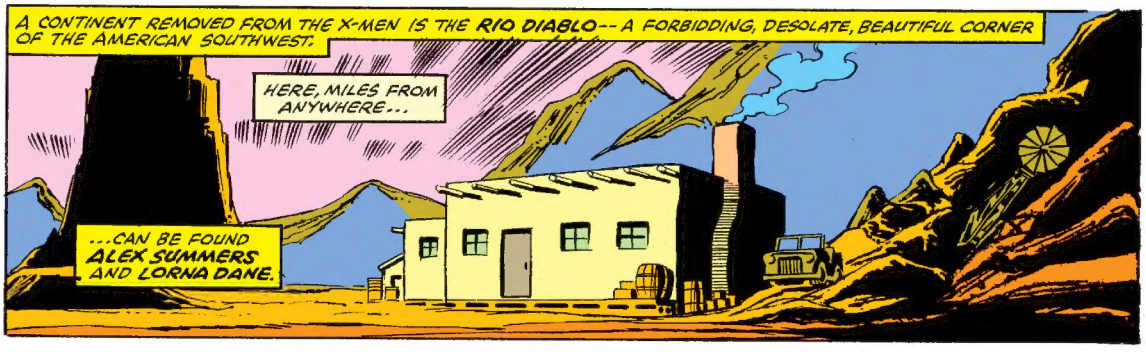

IF THE X-MEN PLAN TO TACKLE DR. DOOM, YOU'LL NEED ALL THE HELP YOU CAN GET. I CAN ALERT MY FELLOW AVENGERS.
THANK YOU, BEAST. PERHAPS.
FOR THE PRESENT, I PREFER TO KEEP THIS MATTER "WITHIN THE FAMILY."

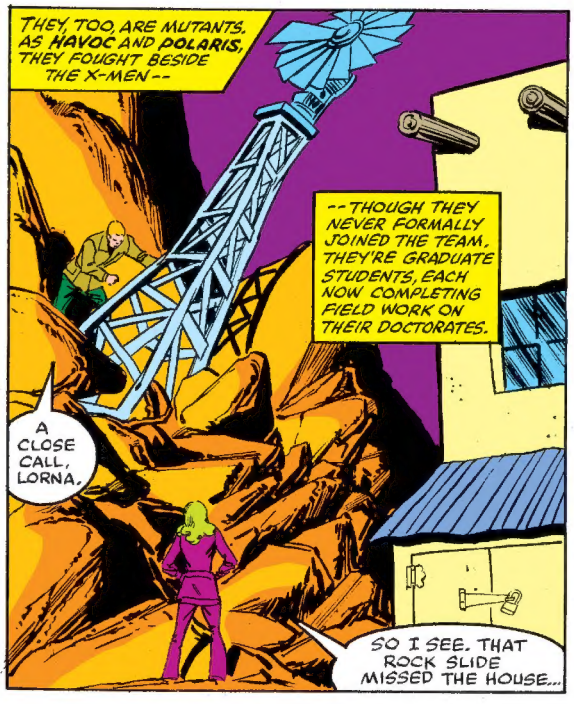
AS YOU REQUESTED, I'LL TRANSMIT THE AVENGERS' FILES ON DOOM TO YOU. I HOPE THEY'LL DO SOME GOOD. BEAST, OUT.
CHARLEY, YOU TALK LIKE WE PLAN ON DOIN' WHAT THAT LOCKE BROAD WANTS! ARE WE GIVIN' IN?!
EXCELLENT, HANK. WE'LL BE IN TOUCH.

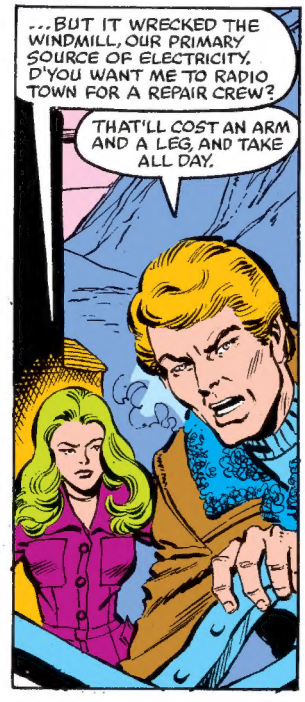
HAVE YOU AN ALTERNATIVE, WOLVERINE?
TRASH HER, PERMANENTLY, AND MURDER-WORLD. GET OUR PEOPLE BACK AN' LET ARCADE ROT!
CHARLEY, WE CAN'T YIELD TO BLACKMAIL. IF MISS LOCKE GETS AWAY WITH THIS, WE'LL NEVER SEE AN END TO IT.

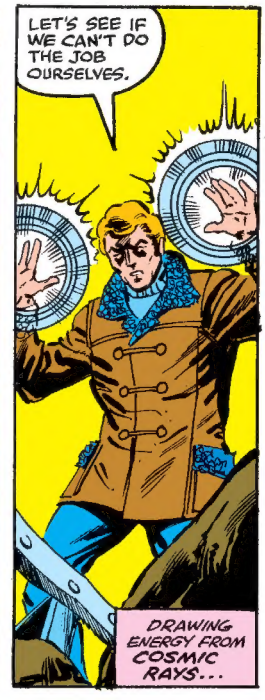
WE CAN'T PROTECT ALL THOSE WE CARE FOR. WE'LL ALWAYS BE VULNERABLE THAT WAY. OUR ONLY CHANCE IS TA STOP IT BEFORE IT STARTS. WE FIGHT BACK!
WE MAKE CERTAIN NO ONE EVER TRIES TA GET AT THE X-MEN THIS WAY AGAIN -- BY MAKIN' THE PRICE OF DOIN' IT TOO HIGH TA PAY.

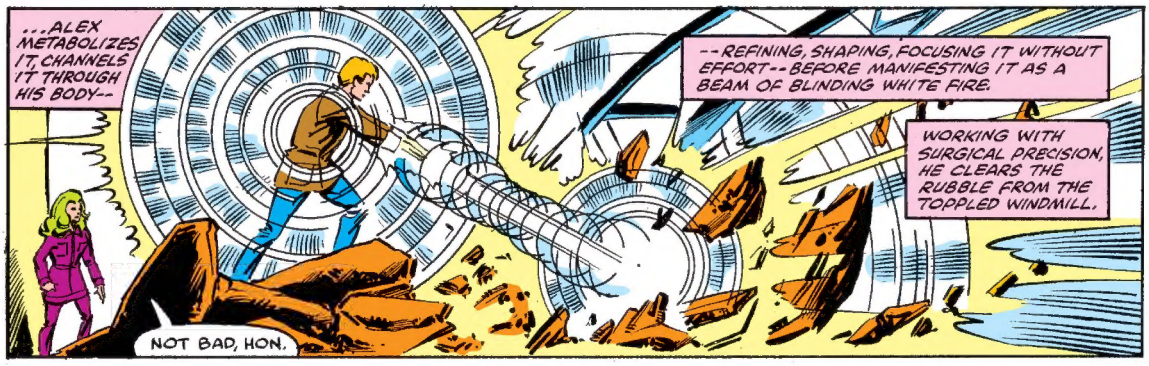
WOLVERINE IS... RIGHT, PROFESSOR -- AT LEAST IN PART. WE CANNOT SUBMIT. YET WE CANNOT ABANDON MISS LOCKE'S HOSTAGES. AND I WILL NOT SACRIFICE THEM.
YOU SPEAK AS THOUGH YOU HAVE A PLAN, STORM.
I HAVE.

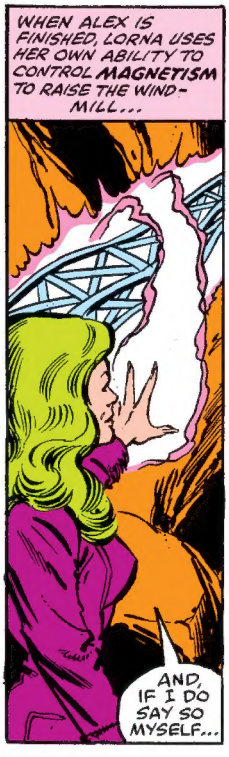

A CONTINENT REMOVED FROM THE X-MEN IS THE RIO DIABLO -- A FORBIDDING, DESOLATE, BEAUTIFUL CORNER OF THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST.
HERE, MILES FROM ANYWHERE...
...CAN BE FOUND ALEX SUMMERS AND LORNA DANE.

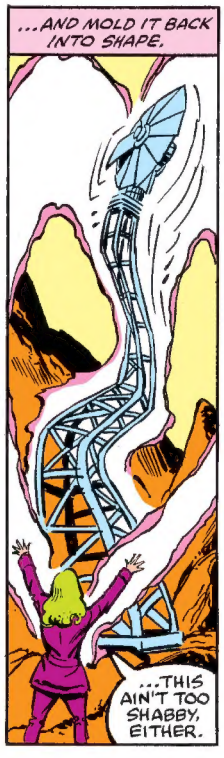

THEY, TOO, ARE MUTANTS. AS HAVOC AND POLARIS, THEY FOUGHT BESIDE THE X-MEN --
-- THOUGH THEY NEVER FORMALLY JOINED THE TEAM, THEY'RE GRADUATE STUDENTS, EACH NOW COMPLETING FIELD WORK ON THEIR DOCTORATES.
A CLOSE CALL, LORNA.
SO I SEE. THAT ROCK SLIDE MISSED THE HOUSE...

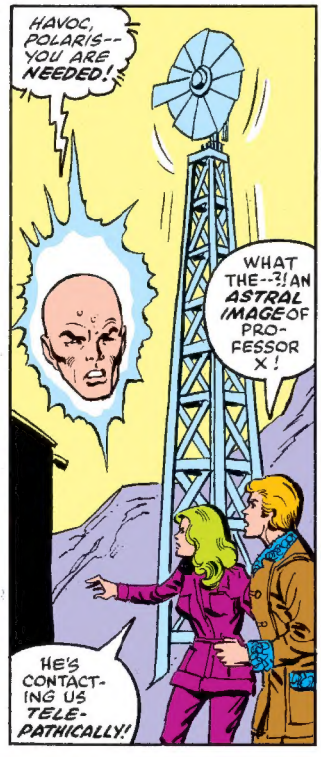

...BUT IT WRECKED THE WINDMILL, OUR PRIMARY SOURCE OF ELECTRICITY. D'YOU WANT ME TO RADIO TOWN FOR A REPAIR CREW?
THAT'LL COST AN ARM AND A LEG, AND TAKE ALL DAY.

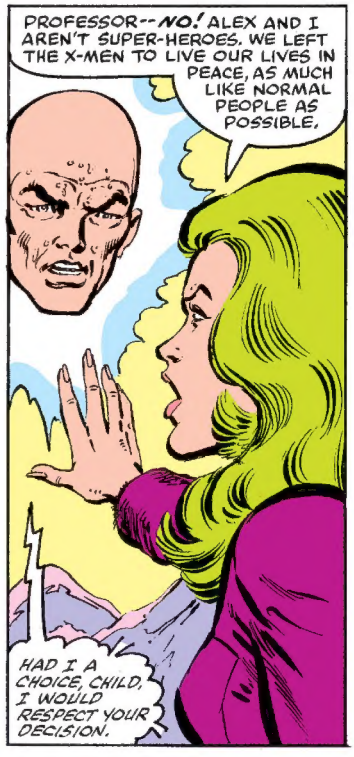

LET'S SEE IF WE CAN'T DO THE JOB OURSELVES.
DRAWING ENERGY FROM COSMIC RAYS...


...ALEX METABOLIZES IT, CHANNELS IT THROUGH HIS BODY--
--REFINING, SHAPING, FOCUSING IT WITHOUT EFFORT--BEFORE MANIFESTING IT AS A BEAM OF BLINDING WHITE FIRE.
WORKING WITH SURGICAL PRECISION, HE CLEARS THE RUBBLE FROM THE TOPPLED WINDMILL.
NOT BAD, HON.

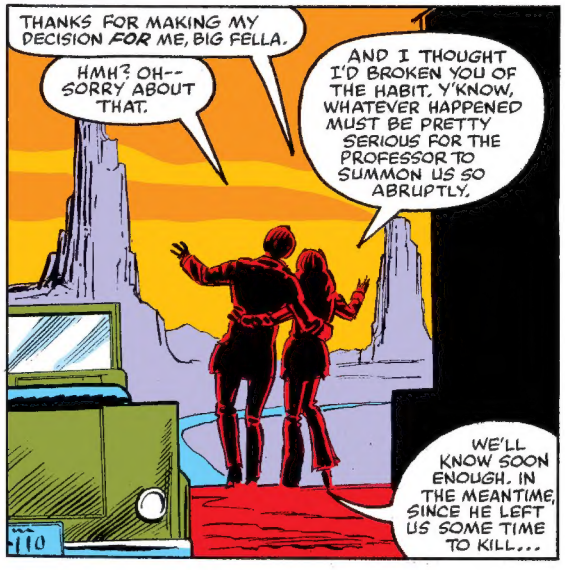

WHEN ALEX IS FINISHED, LORNA USES HER OWN ABILITY TO CONTROL MAGNETISM TO RAISE THE WINDMILL...
AND, IF I DO SAY SO MYSELF...

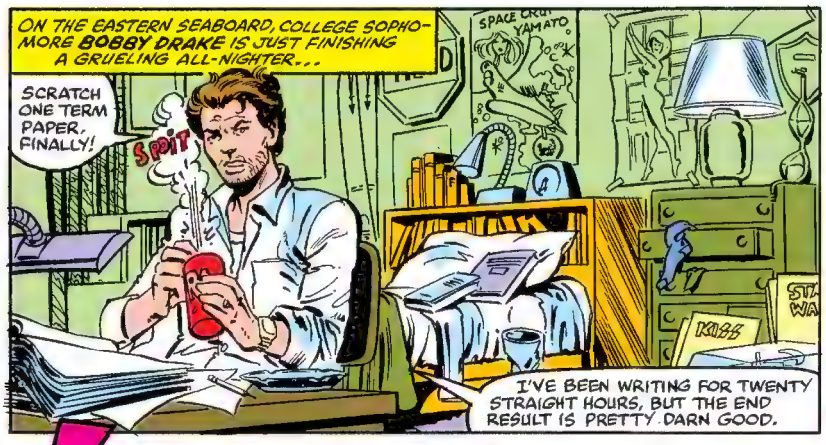

...AND MOLD IT BACK INTO SHAPE.
...THIS AIN'T TOO SHABBY, EITHER.

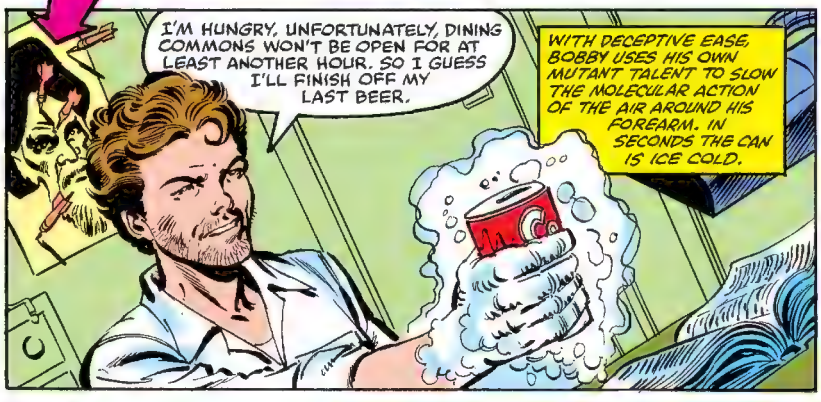

HAVOC, POLARIS--YOU ARE NEEDED!
WHAT THE--?! AN ASTRAL IMAGE OF PROFESSOR X!
HE'S CONTACTING US TELEPATHICALLY!


PROFESSOR--NO! ALEX AND I AREN'T SUPER-HEROES. WE LEFT THE X-MEN TO LIVE OUR LIVES IN PEACE, AS MUCH LIKE NORMAL PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE.
HAD I A CHOICE, CHILD, I WOULD RESPECT YOUR DECISION.

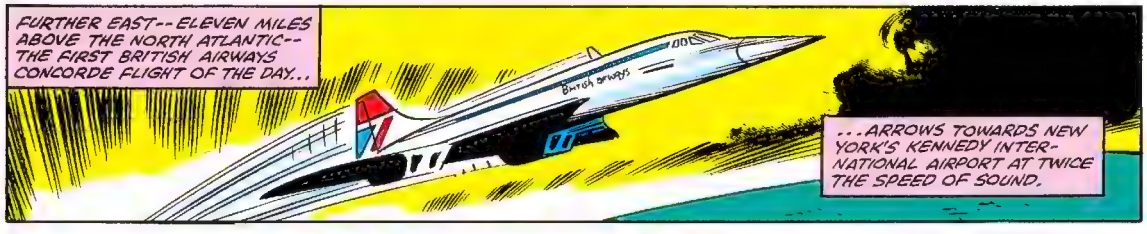
BUT I HAVE NOT. THE NEED IS DESPERATE.
ANGEL HAS SENT ONE OF HIS PRIVATE AIRCRAFT FOR YOU. IT WILL ARRIVE AT YOUR LOCAL AIRPORT IN APPROXIMATELY TWO HOURS.
WILL YOU BE THERE TO MEET IT?
WE'LL... BE THERE, SIR.

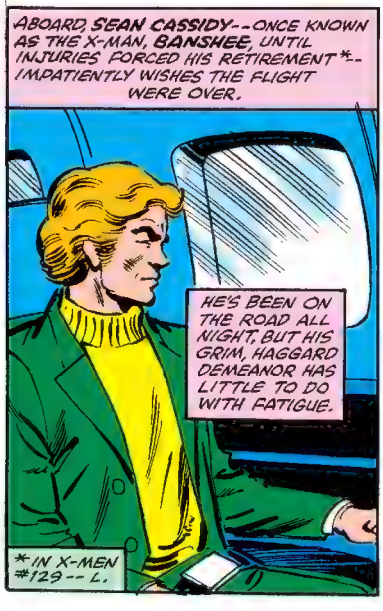

THANKS FOR MAKING MY DECISION FOR ME, BIG FELLA.
HMH? OH--SORRY ABOUT THAT.
AND I THOUGHT I'D BROKEN YOU OF THE HABIT. Y'KNOW, WHATEVER HAPPENED MUST BE PRETTY SERIOUS FOR THE PROFESSOR TO SUMMON US SO ABRUPTLY.
WE'LL KNOW SOON ENOUGH. IN THE MEANTIME, SINCE HE LEFT US SOME TIME TO KILL...


ON THE EASTERN SEABOARD, COLLEGE SOPHOMORE BOBBY DRAKE IS JUST FINISHING A GRUELING ALL-NIGHTER...
SCRATCH ONE TERM PAPER, FINALLY!
SPIT
SPACE CRUI YAMATO
KABB
I'VE BEEN WRITING FOR TWENTY STRAIGHT HOURS, BUT THE END RESULT IS PRETTY DARN GOOD.

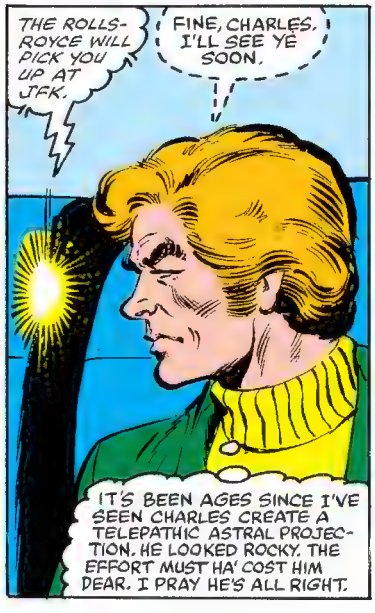

I'M HUNGRY, UNFORTUNATELY, DINING COMMONS WON'T BE OPEN FOR AT LEAST ANOTHER HOUR. SO I GUESS I'LL FINISH OFF MY LAST BEER.
WITH DECEPTIVE EASE, BOBBY USES HIS OWN MUTANT TALENT TO SLOW THE MOLECULAR ACTION OF THE AIR AROUND HIS FOREARM. IN SECONDS THE CAN IS ICE COLD.

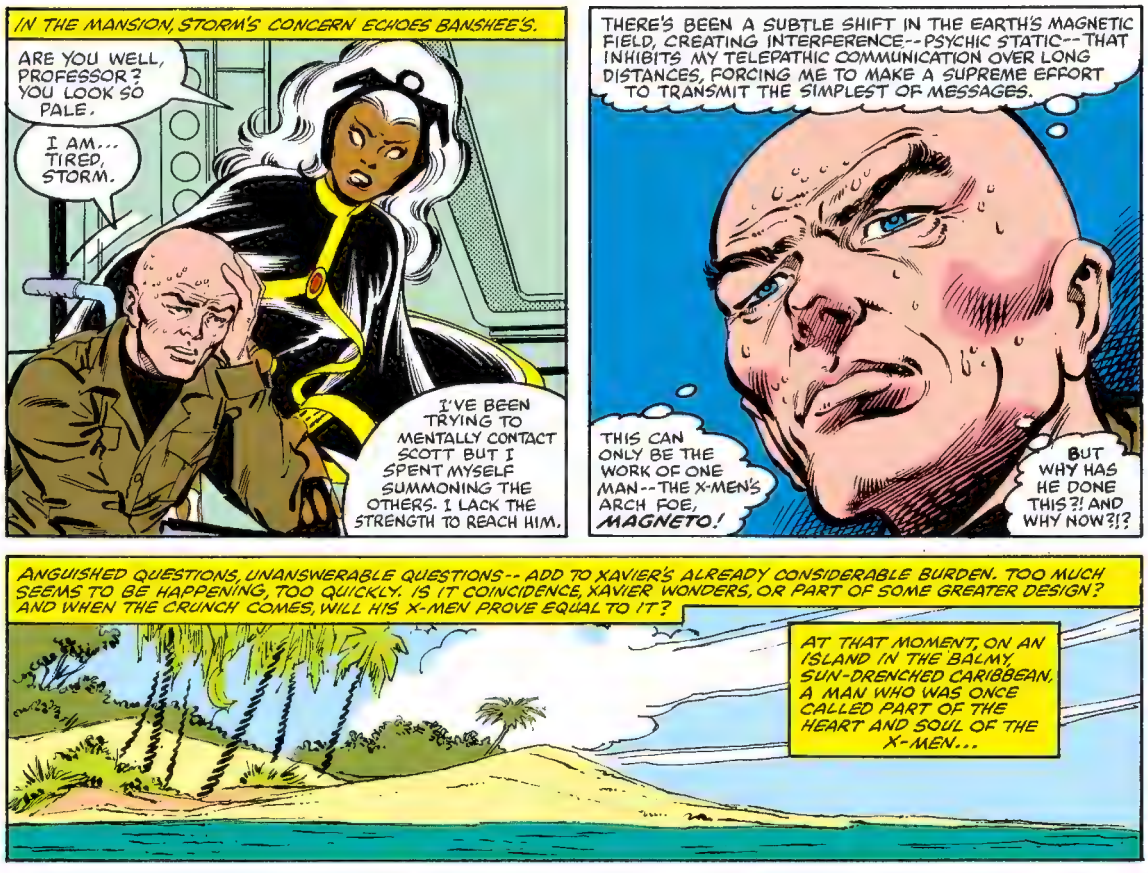
ICEMAN-- YOU ARE NEEDED!
PROFESSOR X!
RETURN TO THE MANSION, AT ONCE. I'LL EXPLAIN WHEN YOU REACH HERE.

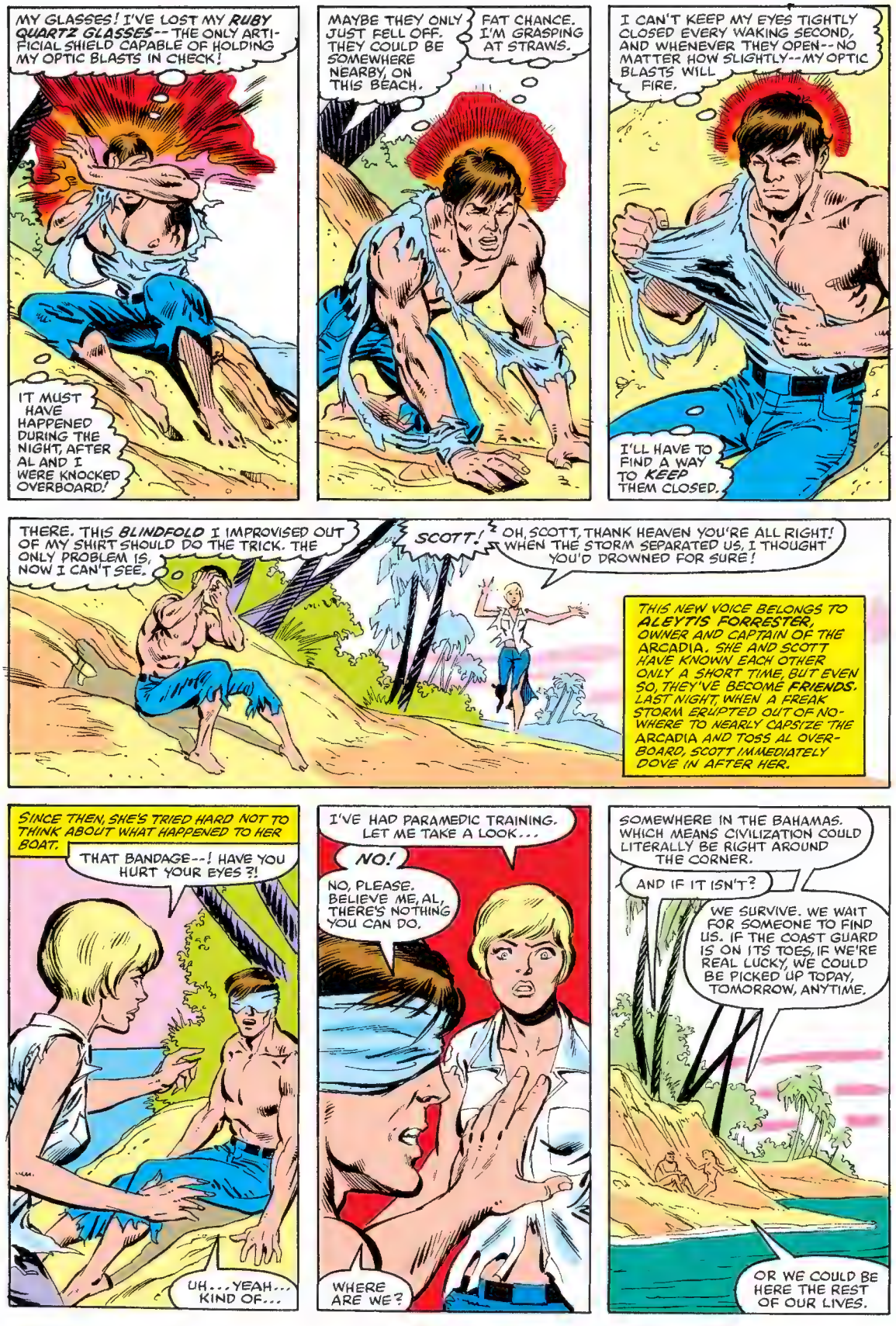

FURTHER EAST--ELEVEN MILES ABOVE THE NORTH ATLANTIC--THE FIRST BRITISH AIRWAYS CONCORDE FLIGHT OF THE DAY..
...ARROWS TOWARDS NEW YORK'S KENNEDY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AT TWICE THE SPEED OF SOUND.

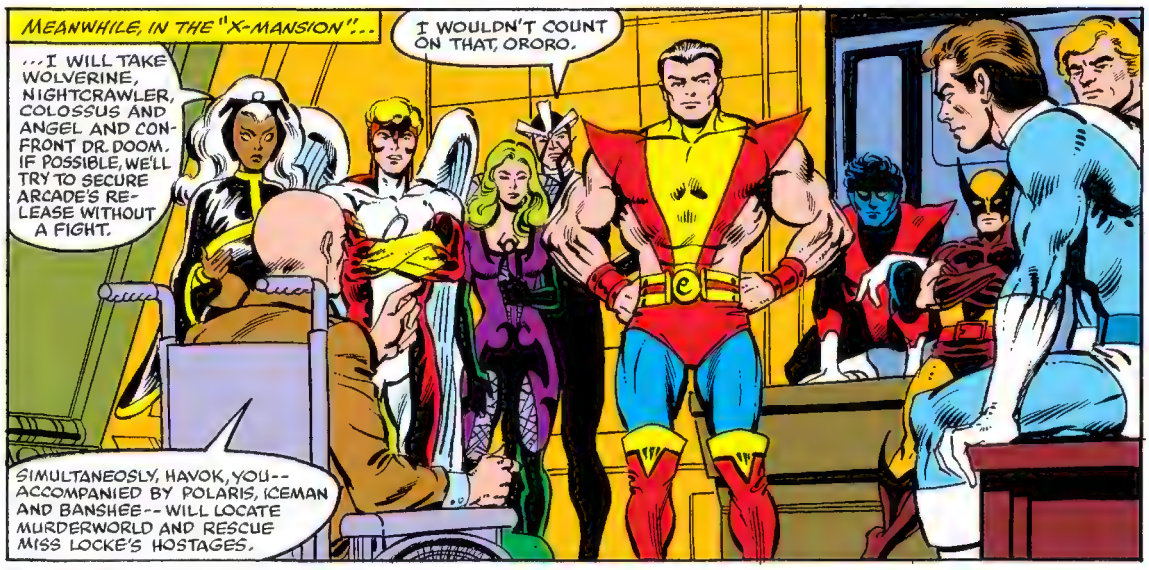

ABOARD, SEAN CASSIDY--ONCE KNOWN AS THE X-MAN, BANSHEE, UNTIL INJURIES FORCED HIS RETIREMENT*--IMPATIENTLY WISHES THE FLIGHT WERE OVER.
HE'S BEEN ON THE ROAD ALL NIGHT, BUT HIS GRIM, HAGGARD DEMEANOR HAS LITTLE TO DO WITH FATIGUE.
*IN X-MEN #129 -- L.

BANSHEE--!
CHARLES! WE'VE GOT TROUBLE, OLD FRIEND. MOIRA'S BEEN KIDNAPPED!
I KNOW, SEAN. SHE WAS NOT THE ONLY ONE.
I'D INTENDED ASKING YOUR AID. IT SEEMS YOU'VE ANTICIPATED ME.


THE ROLLS-ROYCE WILL PICK YOU UP AT J'FK.
FINE, CHARLES. I'LL SEE YE SOON.
IT'S BEEN AGES SINCE I'VE SEEN CHARLES CREATE A TELEPATHIC ASTRAL PROJECTION. HE LOOKED ROCKY. THE EFFORT MUST HA' COST HIM DEAR. I PRAY HE'S ALL RIGHT.


IN THE MANSION, STORM'S CONCERN ECHOES BANSHEE'S.
ARE YOU WELL, PROFESSOR? YOU LOOK SO PALE.
I AM... TIRED, STORM.
I'VE BEEN TRYING TO MENTALLY CONTACT SCOTT BUT I SPENT MYSELF SUMMONING THE OTHERS. I LACK THE STRENGTH TO REACH HIM.
THERE'S BEEN A SUBTLE SHIFT IN THE EARTH'S MAGNETIC FIELD, CREATING INTERFERENCE--PSYCHIC STATIC--THAT INHIBITS MY TELEPATHIC COMMUNICATION OVER LONG DISTANCES, FORCING ME TO MAKE A SUPREME EFFORT TO TRANSMIT THE SIMPLEST OF MESSAGES.
THIS CAN ONLY BE THE WORK OF ONE MAN--THE X-MEN'S ARCH FOE, MAGNETO!
BUT WHY HAS HE DONE THIS?! AND WHY NOW?!?
ANGUISHED QUESTIONS, UNANSWERABLE QUESTIONS--ADD TO XAVIER'S ALREADY CONSIDERABLE BURDEN. TOO MUCH SEEMS TO BE HAPPENING, TOO QUICKLY. IS IT COINCIDENCE, XAVIER WONDERS, OR PART OF SOME GREATER DESIGN? AND WHEN THE CRUNCH COMES, WILL HIS X-MEN PROVE EQUAL TO IT?
AT THAT MOMENT, ON AN ISLAND IN THE BALMY, SUN-DRENCHED CARIBBEAN, A MAN WHO WAS ONCE CALLED PART OF THE HEART AND SOUL OF THE X-MEN...
...IS WASHED ASHORE AND STRANDED BY THE FALLING TIDE.
HIS NAME IS SCOTT SUMMERS.
AS CYCLOPS, HE LED THE X-MEN, UNTIL JEAN GREY'S DEATH. AFTER THAT, HE TOOK A LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM THE TEAM.
LATELY, HE'S BEEN A CREWMAN ABOARD THE TRAWLER, ARCADIA. HE LIES STILL ON THE BEACH...
UNNNNHHH--WHERE AM...
...UNTIL THE MORNING SUN WARMS HIM, WAKES HIM. WITHOUT THINKING, HE OPENS HIS EYES.
RUBY BEAMS OF FORCE--CYCLOPS UNCONTROLLABLE, NIGH IRRESISTIBLE OPTIC BLASTS--EXPLODE FROM HIS EYES, GOUGING A DEEP HOLE IN THE SAND...
...IIIIIIIIII--!!
ZKOW
...AND SIMULTANEOUSLY HURL SCOTT INTO THE AIR.

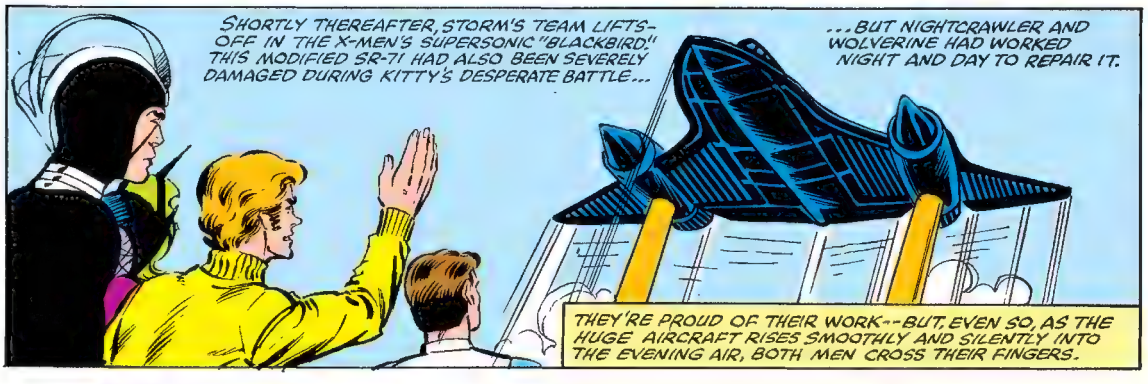

MY GLASSES! I'VE LOST MY RUBY QUARTZ GLASSES-- THE ONLY ARTIFICIAL SHIELD CAPABLE OF HOLDING MY OPTIC BLASTS IN CHECK!
IT MUST HAVE HAPPENED DURING THE NIGHT, AFTER AL AND I WERE KNOCKED OVERBOARD!
MAYBE THEY ONLY JUST FELL OFF. THEY COULD BE SOMEWHERE NEARBY, ON THIS BEACH.
FAT CHANCE. I'M GRASPING AT STRAWS.
I CAN'T KEEP MY EYES TIGHTLY CLOSED EVERY WAKING SECOND, AND WHENEVER THEY OPEN--NO MATTER HOW SLIGHTLY--MY OPTIC BLASTS WILL FIRE.
I'LL HAVE TO FIND A WAY TO KEEP THEM CLOSED.
THERE. THIS BLINDFOLD I IMPROVISED OUT OF MY SHIRT SHOULD DO THE TRICK. THE ONLY PROBLEM IS, NOW I CAN'T SEE.
SCOTT!
OH, SCOTT, THANK HEAVEN YOU'RE ALL RIGHT! WHEN THE STORM SEPARATED US, I THOUGHT YOU'D DROWNED FOR SURE!
THIS NEW VOICE BELONGS TO ALEYTIS FORRESTER, OWNER AND CAPTAIN OF THE ARCADIA. SHE AND SCOTT HAVE KNOWN EACH OTHER ONLY A SHORT TIME, BUT EVEN SO, THEY'VE BECOME FRIENDS. LAST NIGHT, WHEN A FREAK STORM ERUPTED OUT OF NOWHERE TO NEARLY CAPSIZE THE ARCADIA AND TOSS AL OVERBOARD, SCOTT IMMEDIATELY DOVE IN AFTER HER.
SINCE THEN, SHE'S TRIED HARD NOT TO THINK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO HER BOAT.
THAT BANDAGE--! HAVE YOU HURT YOUR EYES?!
UH...YEAH... KIND OF...
I'VE HAD PARAMEDIC TRAINING. LET ME TAKE A LOOK...
NO!
NO, PLEASE. BELIEVE ME, AL, THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO.
WHERE ARE WE?
SOMEWHERE IN THE BAHAMAS. WHICH MEANS CIVILIZATION COULD LITERALLY BE RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER.
AND IF IT ISN'T?
WE SURVIVE. WE WAIT FOR SOMEONE TO FIND US. IF THE COAST GUARD IS ON ITS TOES, IF WE'RE REAL LUCKY, WE COULD BE PICKED UP TODAY, TOMORROW, ANYTIME.
OR WE COULD BE HERE THE REST OF OUR LIVES.


MEANWHILE, IN THE "X-MANSION"...
...I WILL TAKE WOLVERINE, NIGHTCRAWLER, COLOSSUS AND ANGEL AND CONFRONT DR. DOOM. IF POSSIBLE, WE'LL TRY TO SECURE ARCADE'S RELEASE WITHOUT A FIGHT.
I WOULDN'T COUNT ON THAT, ORORO.
SIMULTANEOSLY, HAVOK, YOU--ACCOMPANIED BY POLARIS, ICEMAN AND BANSHEE--WILL LOCATE MURDERWORLD AND RESCUE MISS LOCKE'S HOSTAGES.

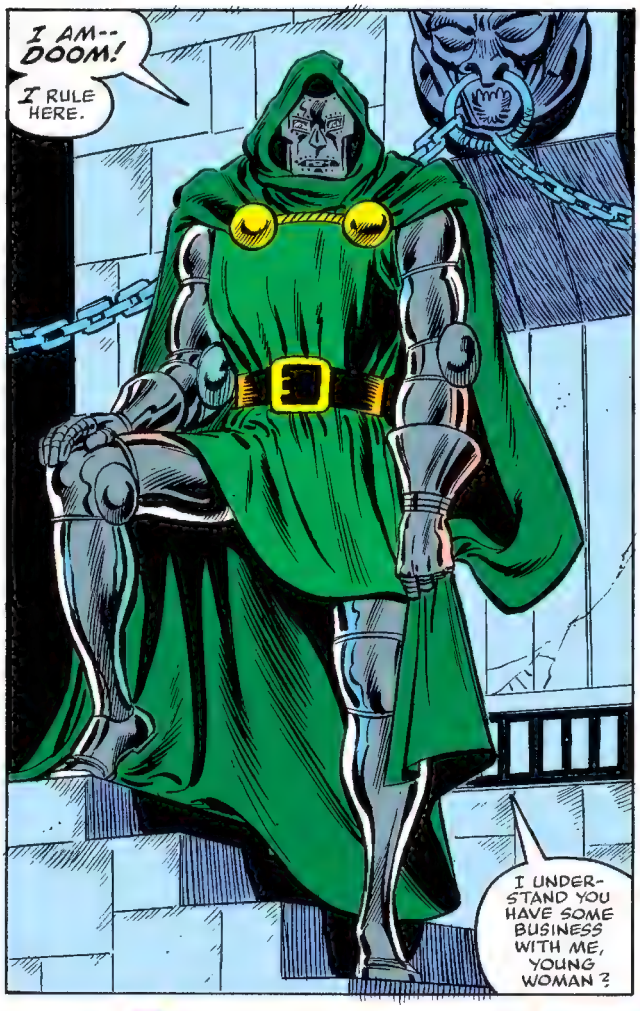
WE FOUR HAVE NEVER OPERATED AS A TEAM. I SUGGEST A COMBAT WORKOUT IN THE DANGER ROOM TO LOOSEN UP.
WHY'S EVERYONE SMILING?
DID I SAY SOMETHING FUNNY?

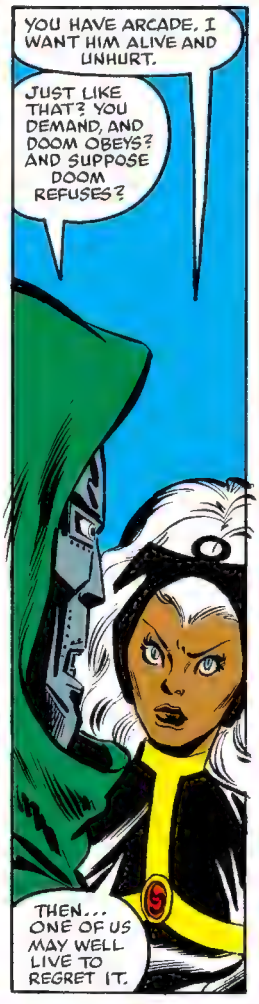
NOT QUITE, HAVOK, BUT AS YOU CAN SEE, THE DANGER ROOM IS TEMPORARILY OUT OF COMMISSION.
WHAT HIT THIS PLACE?!
SPRITE, SHE SINGLE-HANDEDLY FOUGHT--AND DEFEATED SOME SORT OF SUPERHUMAN MONSTER LAST CHRISTMAS EVE.* WE'RE STILL PICKING UP THE PIECES.
*X-MEN #143--LOUISE.

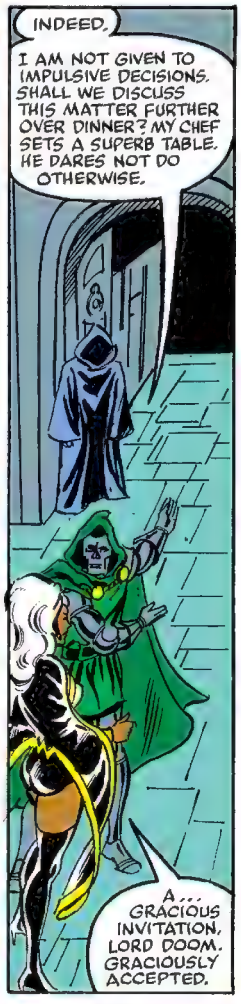
AND, SPEAKING OF THE X-MEN'S YOUNGEST MEMBER...
I WISH I WAS GOING WITH YOU, ORORO.
JUST GET BETTER, LITTLE ONE. THAT'S THE IMORTANT THING.
I KNOW. G'BYE, ORORO. BE CAREFUL. COME BACK SAFE!

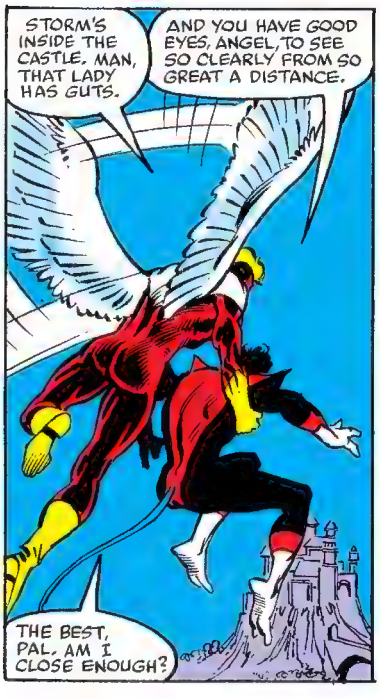

SHORTLY THEREAFTER, STORM'S TEAM LIFTS-OFF IN THE X-MEN'S SUPERSONIC "BLACKBIRD." THIS MODIFIED SR-71 HAD ALSO BEEN SEVERELY DAMAGED DURING KITTY'S DESPERATE BATTLE...
...BUT NIGHTCRAWLER AND WOLVERINE HAD WORKED NIGHT AND DAY TO REPAIR IT.
THEY'RE PROUD OF THEIR WORK--BUT, EVEN SO, AS THE HUGE AIRCRAFT RISES SMOOTHLY AND SILENTLY INTO THE EVENING AIR, BOTH MEN CROSS THEIR FINGERS.

TWO HUNDRED MILES UP-COUNTRY-- IN THE HEART OF NEW YORK'S ADIRONDACK MOUNTAINS-- STANDS A MEDIEVAL CASTLE. ORIGINALLY CONSTRUCTED BY DR. DOOM, IT WAS RECENTLY TURNED INTO AN AMUSEMENT PARK BY ONE OF THE X-MEN'S OLD FOES, NOW REFORMED: THE TOAD:*
DESPITE ITS REMOTENESS, TOADWORLD WAS A GREAT SUCCESS.
*THE AFOREMENTIONED TWO-IN-ONE #68--L.
THEN, WITHOUT WARNING OR EXPLANATION, IT WAS CLOSED DOWN. VISITORS WERE TURNED AWAY, POLITELY BUT FIRMLY. FOR WEEKS NOW, NO OUTSIDER HAS SET FOOT WITHIN ITS TOWERING WALLS.
UNTIL TODAY.
A LIGHTNING BOLT!
BUT--IT'S SO BIG, AND IT DROPPED OUT OF A CLEAR SKY! SOUND THE ALARM! WE'RE UNDER ATTACK!
I AM STORM!!
I COME IN PEACE.
I SEEK THE MASTER OF THIS PLACE. I WOULD SPEAK WITH HIM. IMMEDIATELY.
THIS IS PRIVATE PROPERTY, BABE!
AN' THE BOSS DON'T TAKE KINDLY TO TRESPASSERS!
GET OUT-- OR BE THROWN OUT!
VINCENZO, I DECIDE WHO SHALL-- OR SHALL NOT-- BE REMOVED FROM MY RESIDENCE.


I AM-- DOOM!
I RULE HERE.
I UNDERSTAND YOU HAVE SOME BUSINESS WITH ME, YOUNG WOMAN?

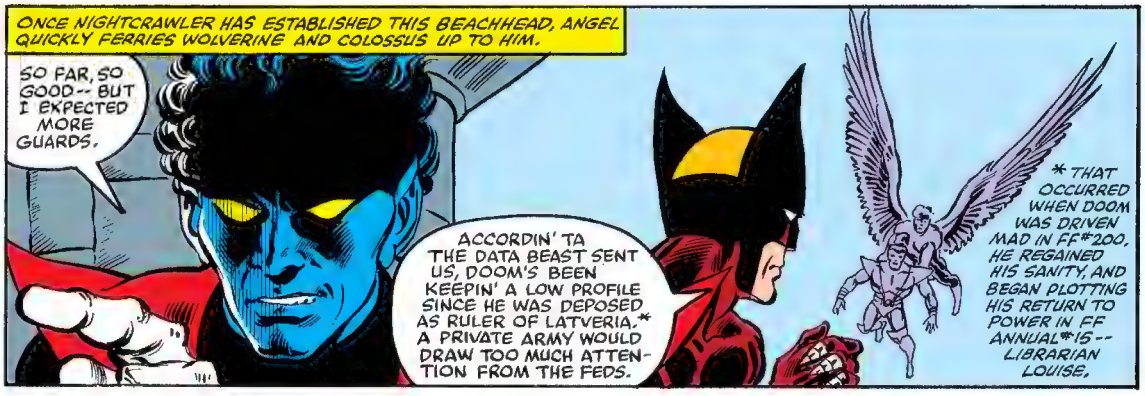

YOU HAVE ARCADE. I WANT HIM ALIVE AND UNHURT.
JUST LIKE THAT? YOU DEMAND, AND DOOM OBEYS? AND SUPPOSE DOOM REFUSES?
THEN... ONE OF US MAY WELL LIVE TO REGRET IT.

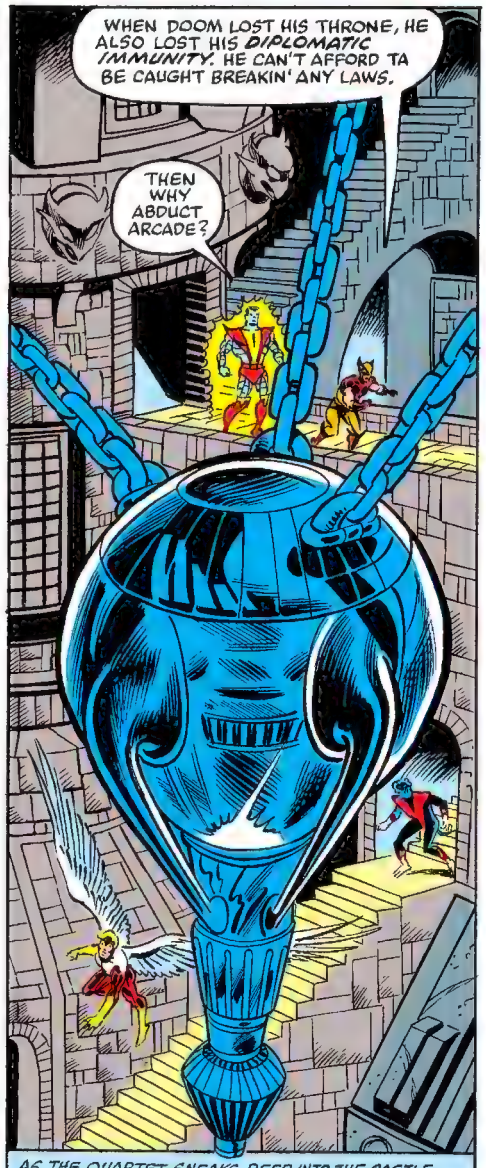

INDEED.
I AM NOT GIVEN TO IMPULSIVE DECISIONS. SHALL WE DISCUSS THIS MATTER FURTHER OVER DINNER? MY CHEF SETS A SUPERB TABLE. HE DARES NOT DO OTHERWISE.
A... GRACIOUS INVITATION, LORD DOOM. GRACIOUSLY ACCEPTED.


STORM'S INSIDE THE CASTLE. MAN, THAT LADY HAS GUTS.
AND YOU HAVE GOOD EYES, ANGEL, TO SEE SO CLEARLY FROM SO GREAT A DISTANCE.
THE BEST, PAL. AM I CLOSE ENOUGH?

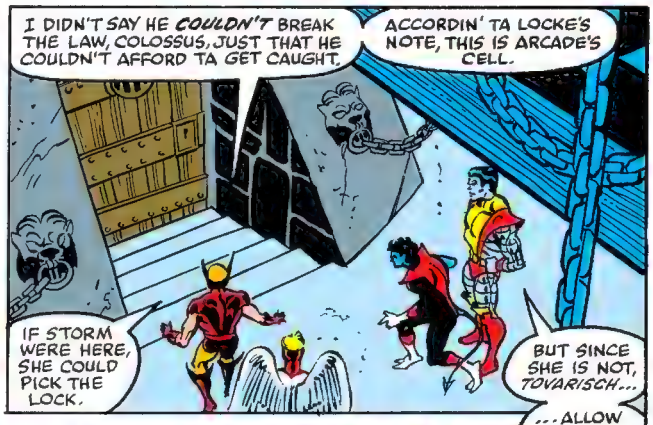
JA. SEE YOU SOON, MEIN FREUND.
WHOUF! WHAT A STINK!
BAMF
WITH THAT DISTINCTIVE BRIMSTONE STENCH, A CRACK OF FLAME AND THE "BAMF" OF IMPLODING AIR, NIGHTCRAWLER TELEPORTS FROM ANGEL'S ARMS...

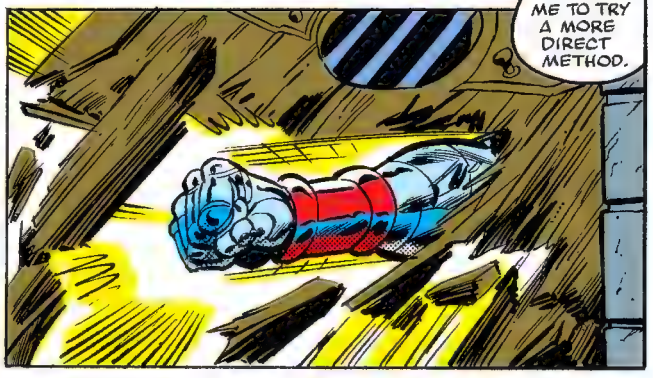
...TO A POINT SLIGHTLY ABOVE THE PARAPET OF DOOM'S CASTLE.
SURPRISE, MEINE HERREN!
THE GUARDS NEVER KNEW WHAT HIT THEM.





AS THE QUARTET SNEAKS DEEP INTO THE CASTLE, COLOSSUS AUTOMATICALLY TRANSFORMS HIMSELF FROM FLESH AND BLOOD TO ORGANIC STEEL. IN THIS ARMORED FORM, HE POSSESSES AWESOME POWER AND NEAR-TOTAL INVULNERABILITY. FOR ALL THAT, HE MOVES AS QUICKLY, AS QUIETLY, AS WOLVERINE.

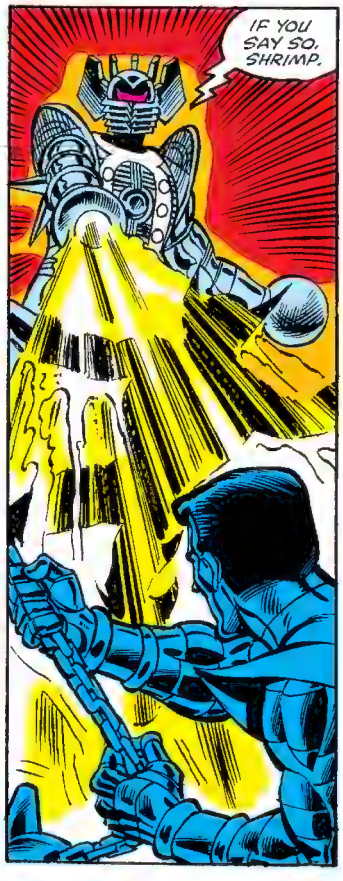


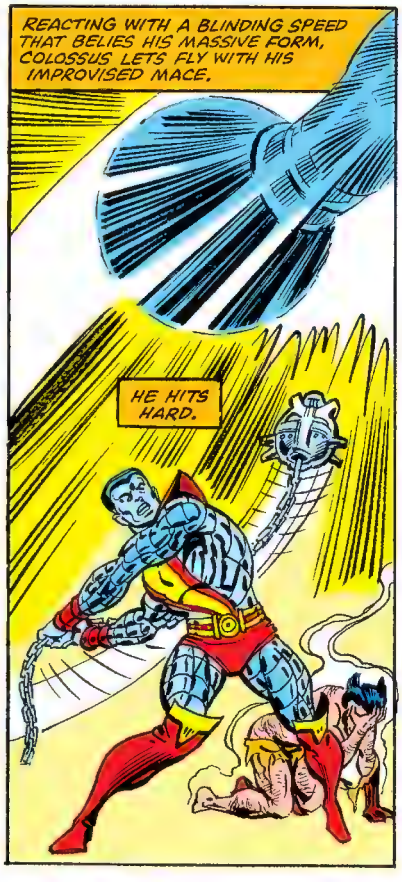


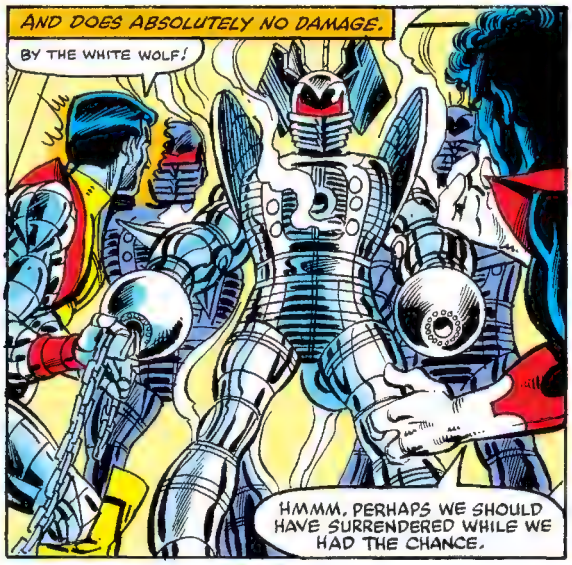
I SUGGEST YOU GIVE UP. THESE BATTLE SUITS WERE DESIGNED TO TRASH THE FANTASTIC FOUR.

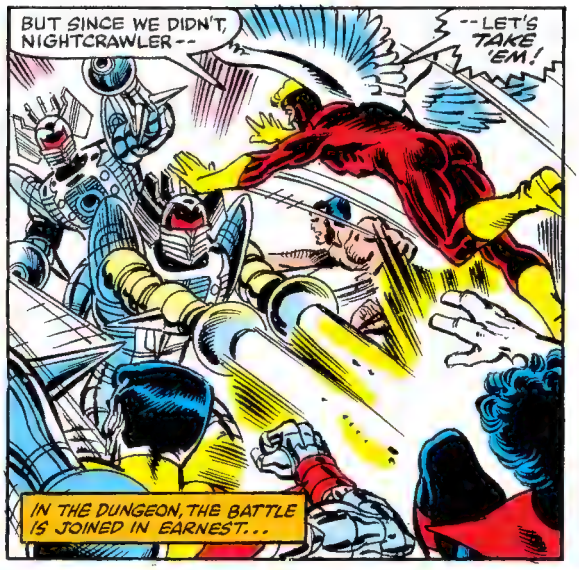
TRASHIN' YOU FREAKS SHOULD BE CHILD'S-PLAY.

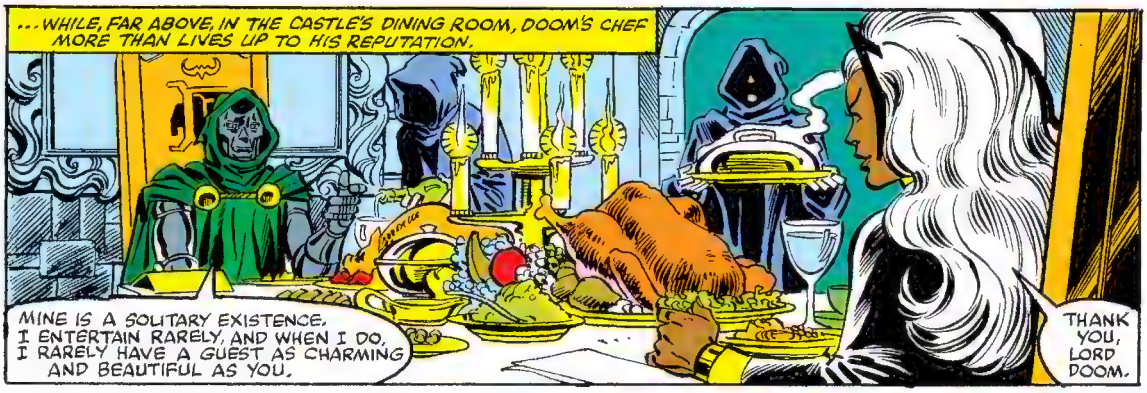
WE AIN'T THE F.F., BUB. WE'RE THE X-MEN!





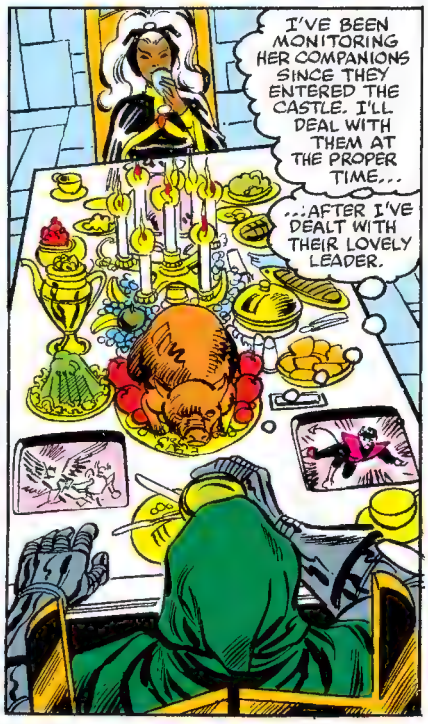

AND DOES ABSOLUTELY NO DAMAGE.
BY THE WHITE WOLF!
HMMM. PERHAPS WE SHOULD HAVE SURRENDERED WHILE WE HAD THE CHANCE.

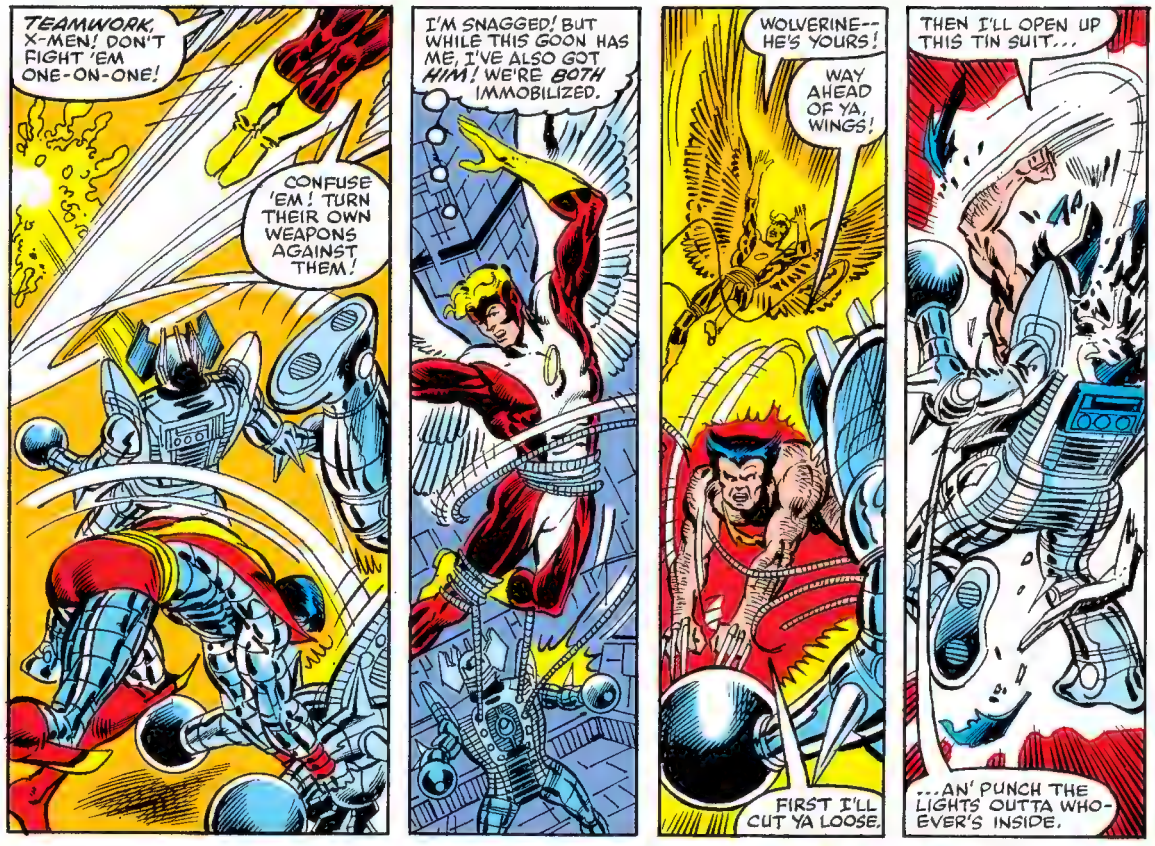

BUT SINCE WE DIDN'T, NIGHTCRAWLER--
--LET'S TAKE 'EM!
IN THE DUNGEON, THE BATTLE IS JOINED IN EARNEST...

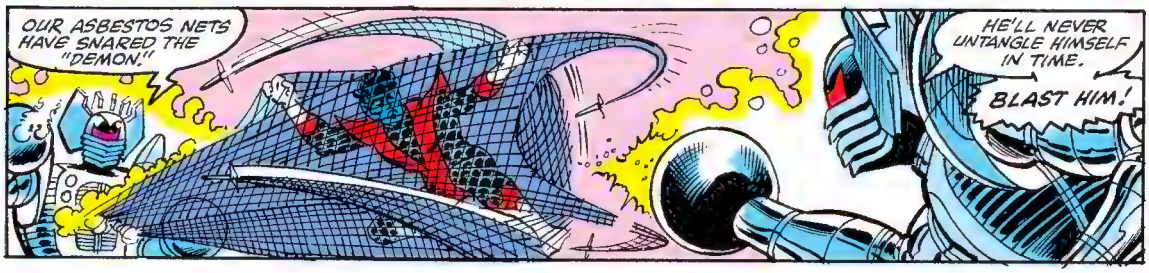

...WHILE, FAR ABOVE, IN THE CASTLE'S DINING ROOM, DOOM'S CHEF MORE THAN LIVES UP TO HIS REPUTATION.
MINE IS A SOLITARY EXISTENCE. I ENTERTAIN RARELY, AND WHEN I DO, I RARELY HAVE A GUEST AS CHARMING AND BEAUTIFUL AS YOU.
THANK YOU, LORD DOOM.

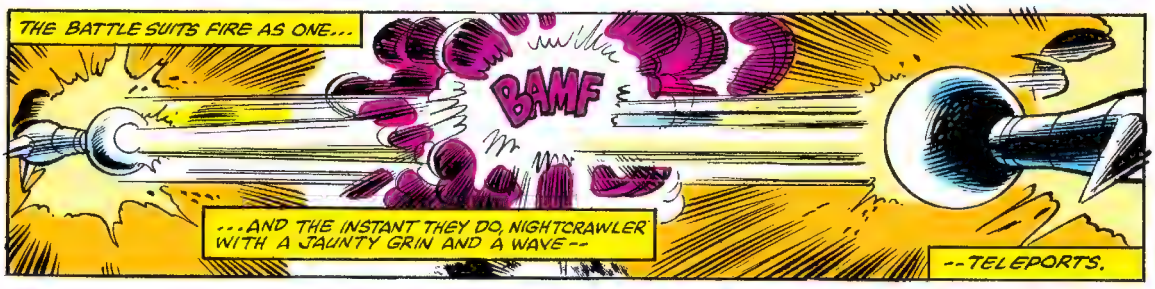
I'M ACTUALLY...ENJOYING THIS-- AND REGRETTING THAT MY SOLE PURPOSE HERE IS TO KEEP DOOM OCCUPIED WHILE MY FELLOW X-MEN FIND AND FREE ARCADE. THEY SHOULD HAVE REACHED HIS CELL BY NOW.
DOOM IS A... FASCINATING MAN.

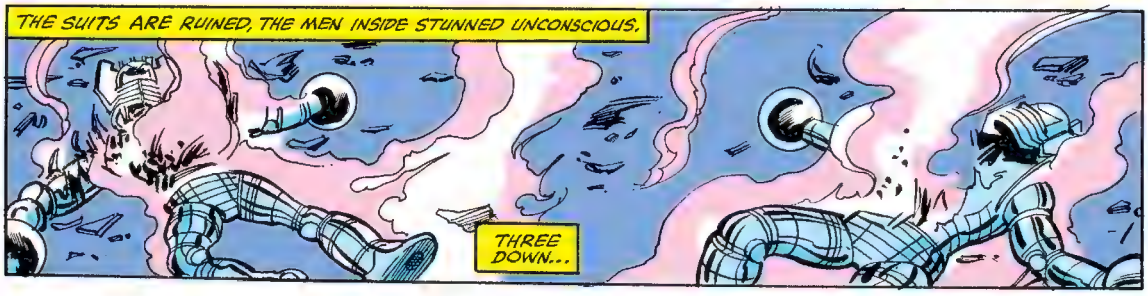
EXTRAORDINARY. STORM SEEMS DRAWN TO ME, AS I AM TO HER. LIONESS TO LION. QUEEN TO KING.
SHE DOES NOT FEAR ME.
SHE SHOULD. SHE WILL.

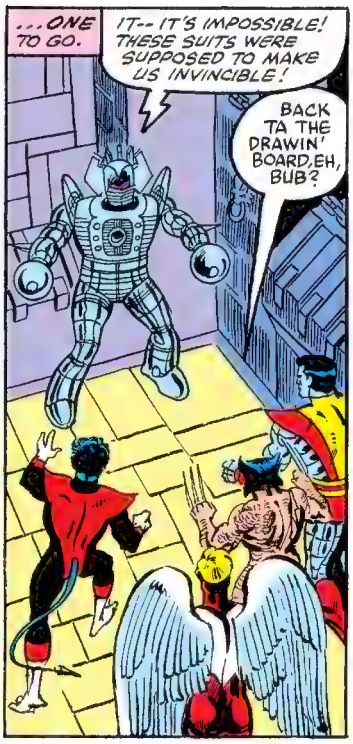

I'VE BEEN MONITORING HER COMPANIONS SINCE THEY ENTERED THE CASTLE. I'LL DEAL WITH THEM AT THE PROPER TIME...
...AFTER I'VE DEALT WITH THEIR LOVELY LEADER.

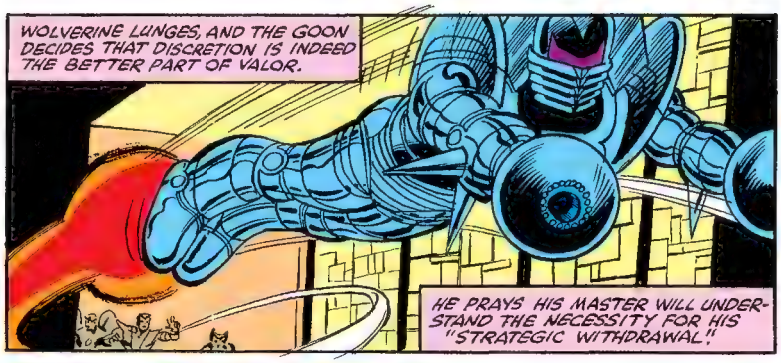

TEAMWORK, X-MEN! DON'T FIGHT 'EM ONE-ON-ONE!
CONFUSE 'EM! TURN THEIR OWN WEAPONS AGAINST THEM!
I'M SNAGGED! BUT WHILE THIS GOON HAS ME, I'VE ALSO GOT HIM! WE'RE BOTH IMMOBILIZED.
WOLVERINE-- HE'S YOURS!
WAY AHEAD OF YA, WINGS!
FIRST I'LL CUT YA LOOSE.
THEN I'LL OPEN UP THIS TIN SUIT...
...AN' PUNCH THE LIGHTS OUTTA WHO-EVER'S INSIDE.

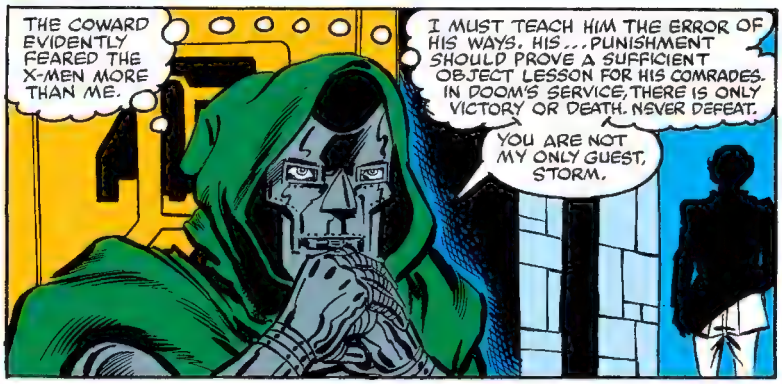

OUR ASBESTOS NETS HAVE SNARED THE "DEMON."
HE'LL NEVER UNTANGLE HIMSELF IN TIME.
BLAST HIM!


THE BATTLE SUITS FIRE AS ONE...
BAMF
...AND THE INSTANT THEY DO, NIGHTCRAWLER WITH A JAUNTY GRIN AND A WAVE--
--TELEPORTS.

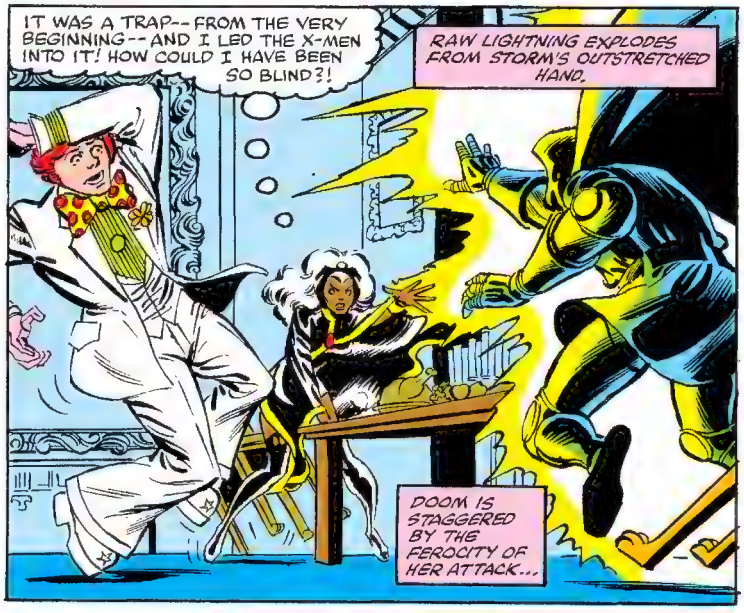

THE SUITS ARE RUINED, THE MEN INSIDE STUNNED UNCONSCIOUS.
THREE DOWN...


...ONE TO GO.
IT-- IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! THESE SUITS WERE SUPPOSED TO MAKE US INVINCIBLE!
BACK TA THE DRAWIN' BOARD, EH, BUB?

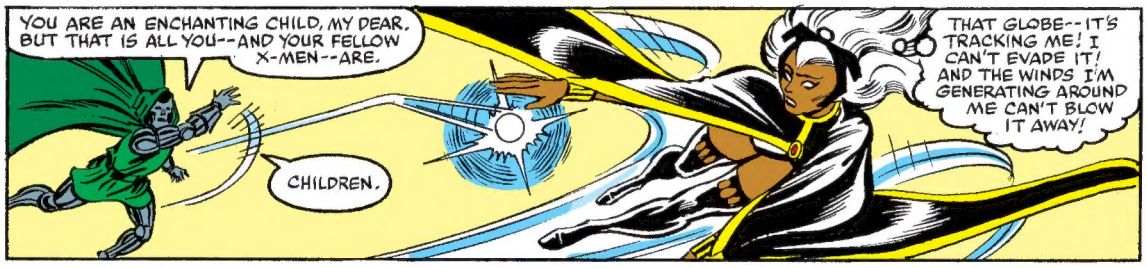

WOLVERINE LUNGES, AND THE GOON DECIDES THAT DISCRETION IS INDEED THE BETTER PART OF VALOR.
HE PRAYS HIS MASTER WILL UNDERSTAND THE NECESSITY FOR HIS "STRATEGIC WITHDRAWAL!"


THE COWARD EVIDENTLY FEARED THE X-MEN MORE THAN ME.
I MUST TEACH HIM THE ERROR OF HIS WAYS. HIS...PUNISHMENT SHOULD PROVE A SUFFICIENT OBJECT LESSON FOR HIS COMRADES. IN DOOM'S SERVICE, THERE IS ONLY VICTORY OR DEATH. NEVER DEFEAT.
YOU ARE NOT MY ONLY GUEST, STORM.

ALLOW ME TO PRESENT--ARCADE.
I BELIEVE YOU KNOW EACH OTHER.
THAT'S A FACT, VIC, THOUGH WE'VE NEVER BEEN FORMALLY INTRODUCED.
HOW DO, SWEET THING.
YOU! A-- "GUEST?!" NOT A PRISONER!?!
NO!!

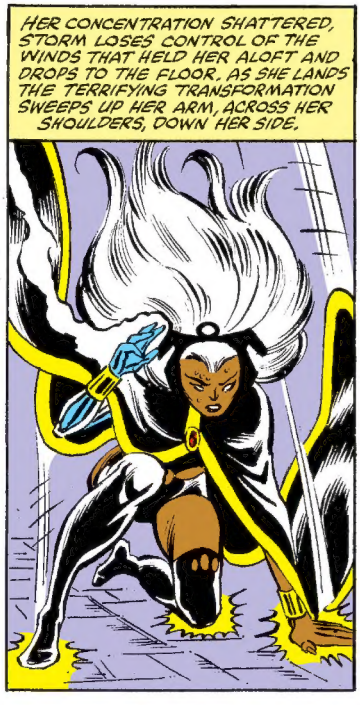

IT WAS A TRAP--FROM THE VERY BEGINNING--AND I LED THE X-MEN INTO IT! HOW COULD I HAVE BEEN SO BLIND?!
RAW LIGHTNING EXPLODES FROM STORM'S OUTSTRETCHED HAND.
DOOM IS STAGGERED BY THE FEROCITY OF HER ATTACK...

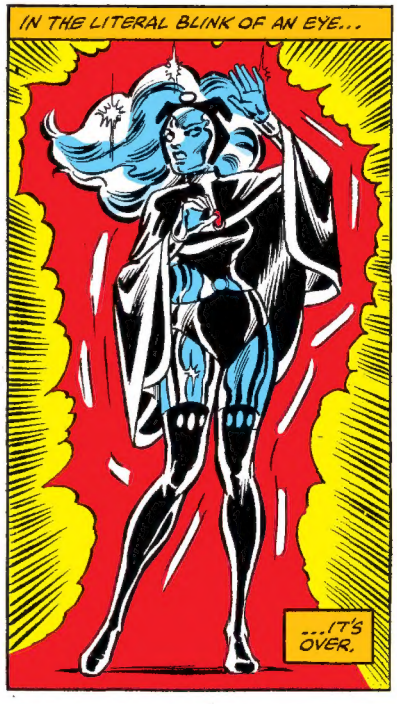
...BUT THAT IS ALL.
AN ADMIRABLE TRY, STORM. AND AN ADMIRABLE PLAN AS WELL.
AGAINST A LESSER FOE, BOTH MIGHT HAVE SUCCEEDED. BUT I AM DOOM. I HAVE FORGOTTEN MORE ABOUT STRATEGY AND COMBAT THAN YOU ARE EVER LIKELY TO LEARN.


YOU ARE AN ENCHANTING CHILD, MY DEAR, BUT THAT IS ALL YOU--AND YOUR FELLOW X-MEN--ARE.
CHILDREN.
THAT GLOBE--IT'S TRACKING ME! I CAN'T EVADE IT! AND THE WINDS I'M GENERATING AROUND ME CAN'T BLOW IT AWAY!

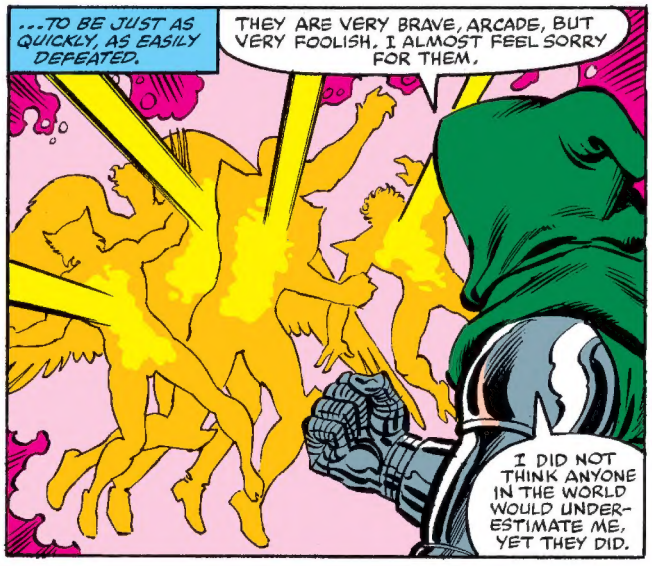
AAAIIII!!
MY ARM'S GONE NUMB!
SENSATIONS--FIRE AND ICE, SO INTENSE, ABSOLUTE AGONY AND...ECSTASY--SHOOTING THROUGH MY ENTIRE BODY!

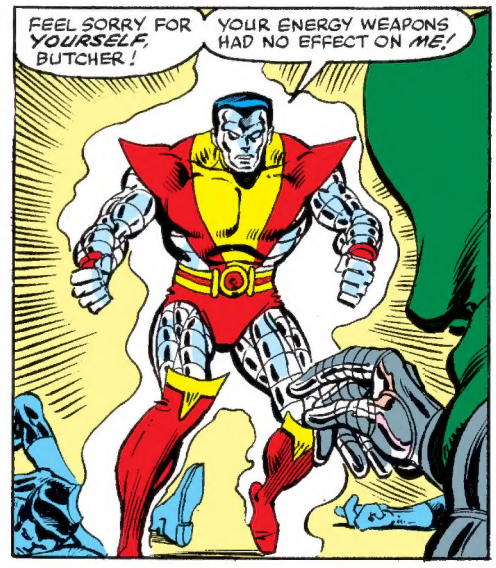
GODDESS!
MY HAND--MY FOREARM--HAS TURNED TO CHROME!
WHAT HAS DOOM DONE TO ME?!?

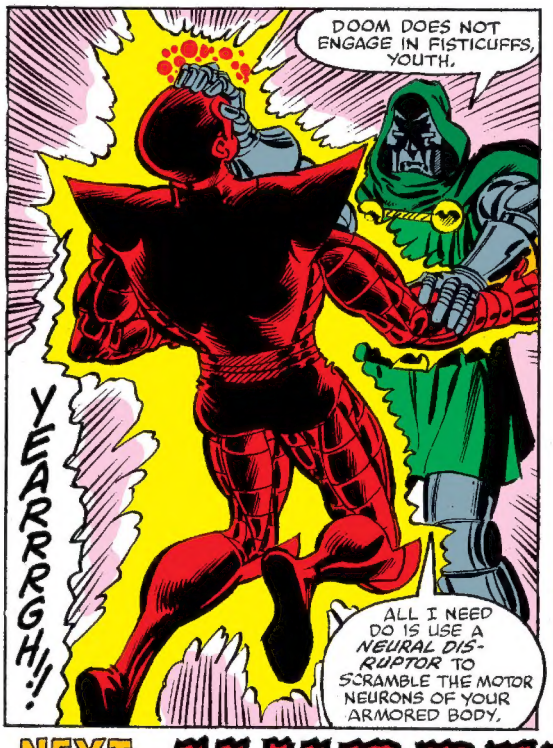

HER CONCENTRATION SHATTERED, STORM LOSES CONTROL OF THE WINDS THAT HELD HER ALOFT AND DROPS TO THE FLOOR. AS SHE LANDS THE TERRIFYING TRANSFORMATION SWEEPS UP HER ARM, ACROSS HER SHOULDERS, DOWN HER SIDE.

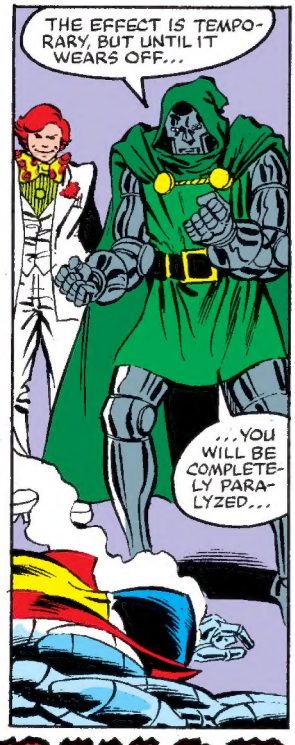

IN THE LITERAL BLINK OF AN EYE...
...IT'S OVER.

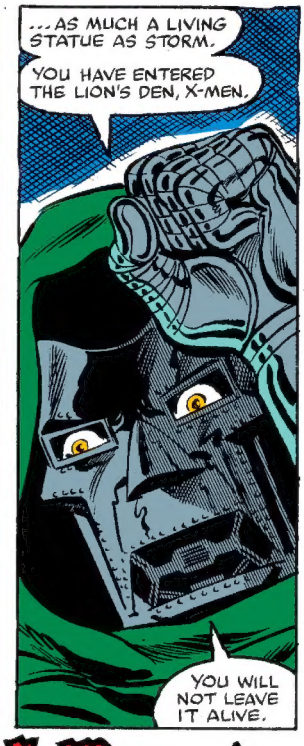
A MOMENT LATER--A MINUTE TOO LATE--
--STORM'S FELLOW X-MEN ARRIVE...











NEXT ISSUE • **MURDERWORLD** •• A LOVELY PLACE TO DIE!

X-MAIL

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP
575 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022

LOUISE JONES
EDITOR
DANNY FINGEROTH
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Last issue, we announced — with pardonable pride — that X-MEN had, once again, fared extremely well in the annual Eagle awards, voted by the comic fans of Great Britain. Now, we have details. Favorite Artist: John Byrne. Favorite Writer: Chris Claremont. Favorite Inker: Terry Austin. Favorite Comic Book: X-MEN. Favorite Character: Wolverine. Favorite Group or Team: X-Men. Favorite Villain: Magneto. Favorite Continued Story: X-MEN #'s 125-128 (the "Proteus" saga. Out of 14 categories, X-MEN took top honors in 8, and placed second in two more. Once again, our sincere thanks both to the fans who supported X-Men — and, one hopes — support it still, and to the sponsors of the Eagle Awards: Richard Burton, Colin Campbell and Mike Conroy (plus others too numerous to name).

Moving right along, some of you may have by now noticed a new — but familiar — hand on X-MEN's artistic helm. It belongs to Dave Cockrum, who six (very) odd years ago, in a fit of delerium, co-created this book. He hasn't been quite the same since. Neither, for that matter, have I. Three years ago, he decided that enough was enough and left X-MEN for greener pastures. Now, though, Dave's back, and producing some of the best work of his career — aided and abetted by Josef Rubinstein, an inker who compliments Dave's pencils as effectively as Terry Austin did John Byrne's. Consider this Doc Doom story — beautiful though it looks — just a warm-up, folks, 'cause we've got Magneto waiting just around the corner and the Starjammers down the street. If you think the X-MEN have led a wild'n'crazy life up to now — hoo-hah (to coin a phrase), you ain't seen NOTHIN' yet!

— chris claremont

Dear Chris & John,

Because of recent events and a comic book that is the state of the art, I write this letter to the X-MEN.

John Lennon was shot yesterday and in some strange way I felt those bullets, too, as I'm sure you did. When Jean Grey died, that strange feeling of loss was there, too — not as bad, of course, but it was there

Lennon did his part when it came to stopping a war, but a lot of us didn't want to get involved. Jean Grey saved the whole damn world, but once more, what could we do? No holiday has been called for John Lennon and in the fantasy world of the X-MEN, no holiday will be had for Ms. Grey either.

Somewhere the unparallel lines of fantasy and real life come dangerously close to touching. When these lines touch we have people like Lee Harvey Oswald and the Mark Chapmans of this world. We have no super heroes to protect us, except those who change our lives and change us from a different fate. John Lennon wore no cape, but he was a hero.

Michael McCarthy
(no address)

Amen to that, Michael. And if we all try to live our lives with half the dignity and grace and concern for others that Lennon did, then perhaps his death won't be wasted. The dreamer dies, the dream goes on.

Dear Marvel,

Wolverine and Nightcrawler's discussion where Wolverine states he takes life only in defense of himself or someone else (#140) and Nightcrawler replies, "Yes, but does that make it right?" is the same debate I had with a pacifist pen-friend once. Buddhism has the concept of the Buddha, or Enlightened One, vs. the Bodhisattva (or someone who refuses Enlightenment until all others are enlightened). So. Shall we resort to violence to save life or shall we keep our own hands clean and to heck with the rest of mankind?

Look at WW II. War is wrong. Killing is wrong. Now take a hard look at Auschwitz and say that again. Let someone else be a pacifist. Like the Bodhisattva, I will refuse this enlightenment (pacifism) until the rest of mankind are pacifists, because I believe we are not only responsible for our acts, but also for the consequences of our acts. In Wolverine's place, I would have answered, "It might not be right but that's the best choice." Sometimes there are no "right" choices available.

By the way, someone quotes Tolkein regarding Jean Grey, but they missed the best words — those of Galadriel upon refusal of the One: "I pass the test. I will diminish and pass into the West — and remain Galadriel."

Pam Siegfried
1200 W. Dimond Sp. 608
Anchorage, AK 99502

Pam, I've thought of Auschwitz — what it was, how it came to be, what it means for me as a person, us as a race — all my adult life. (You see, before I got sidetracked into comics, I'd set out to become a historian and political theorist.) The statements stand: war *is* wrong, killing *is* wrong. Just because there may be no alternative does not mean we should not first seek one. Violence frequently seems the simplest solution to a problem or threat, as it is often the easiest and most emotionally satisfying. But being "civilized" — perhaps, even being human — carries with it the responsibility to at least be *aware* of another path, even if circumstances preclude our following it. In a sense, Nightcrawler was echoing your own beliefs — by reminding Wolverine, however subtly, of the consequences of his acts. Logan holds in his claws, in himself, the power of life and death over those he fights. That is something he must never forget, something he should never treat casually. For if he — or by extension, we — take a life casually, without thought or care, if this supreme gift means so little to us, then all our claims to civilization, all our culture, all our beliefs, aren't really worth a plugged nickel.

— chris claremont 12/80

NEXT ISSUE: While half the X-MEN remain trapped in Dr. Doom's castle, the other half (Havok, Polaris, Iceman and Banshee) have the delightful task of finding Murderworld, penetrating it, and freeing Ms. Locke's hostages. Return with us then, in 30 days, to Arcade's assassination amusement park — to see if the X-Men survive, much less triumph.

— csc

THE MIGHTY MARVEL CHECKLIST

☐ **MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE #75** — ***Double-sized 75th anniversary ish*** featuring the ***Thing*** and the ***Avengers*** vs. Annihilus, Blastaar, and the Super-Adaptoid in the Negative Zone!

☐ **SPIDER-WOMAN #38** — Guest-starring the ***X-Men!***

☐ **STAR TREK #14** — "We Are Dying, Egypt, Dying!"

☐ **MARVEL SUPER HEROES #97** — (Reprinting Hulk #148) The Return of Jarella! Plus: The Inedible Bulk!

☐ **DAZZLER #3** — Dazz at the mercy of... ***Doctor Doom!***

☐ **KA-ZAR #2** — Ka-Zar and Shanna must rescue the kidnapped Leanne!

☐ **DAREDEVIL #170** — ***Now on sale monthly!*** Bullseye vs. the Kingpin with DD caught in the middle!

☐ **SPIDEY SUPER STORIES #52** — Easy readin' super hero pleasure for discriminating younger readers.

☐ **CONAN #122** — "The City Where Time Stood Still!"

☐ **ROM #18** — ROM vs. the ***X-Men.*** 'Nuff said!

☐ **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #216** — The most off-beat Spidey tale of the year: *"Marathon!"*

☐ **CAPTAIN AMERICA #257** — Cap vs. the ***Hulk!***

☐ **MICRONAUTS #29** — Doc Samson sends the Micros into Rann's brain where they are ambushed by... Nightmare!

☐ **GHOST RIDER #56** — The vengeance of Moondark the Magician!

☐ **SAVAGE SHE-HULK #16** — Beware the Microwaves!

☐ **THOR #307** — The terrifying, nightmare-powered Dream Demon! Plus: Loki!

☐ **MOON KNIGHT #7** — "The Moon Kings!"

☐ **INCREDIBLE HULK #259** — Ol' Greenskin and a Soviet super-team take on Russia's deadliest super villains!

☐ **AVENGERS #207** — He's called the Shadow Lord and to save the Earth, he must destroy the Avengers! Why?

☐ **MARVEL TEAM-UP #105** — ***Hulk, Power Man*** and ***Iron Fist*** — *together!*

☐ **IRON MAN #146** — The way-out weaponry of... Blacklash!

☐ **MARVEL TALES #127** — (Reprints Spider-Man #150) Spidey attacked by all his fiercest foes at once! Plus: The Inhumans.

☐ **X-MEN #145** — The riotous return of the new X-Men's original artist: *Dave Cockrum!* Plus: ***Doc Doom,*** the *old X-Men,* Arcade and Murderworld!

☐ **POWER MAN/IRON FIST #69** — Luke and the Fist on the trail of a mercenary gone mad!

☐ **MAN-THING #10** — A bizarre stranger wreaks havoc with the lives of Barbie Bannister, the Kales, John Daltry and... the Man-Thing!

☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR #230** — Final confrontation with the Ebon Seeker!

☐ **MARVEL SUPER ACTION #31** — (Reprints Avengers #70) Showdown with the Squadron Sinister and the Grandmaster! Plus: Marvel U.K.'s ***Hulk!***

☐ **STAR WARS #47** — *"Droid World!"*

☐ **MASTER OF KUNG FU #100** — ***Special double-sized 100th anniversary issue!*** A mad plot hatched decades ago by Fu Manchu stretches across time to menace Shang Chi today!

☐ **PETER PARKER #54** — Spidey puts his life on the line to save the Smuggler from Maggia assassins!

☐ **DEFENDERS #95** — Enter: ***Count Dracula!***

☐ **MARVEL SPOTLIGHT #12** — Spotlight on: ***Captain Marvel!***

MARVEL MAGAZINES

☐ **CRAZY #73** — More than the greatest *laughs* the world has known with *The Best of Crazy!* Plus: The return of the **Fuppets** in a make-it-yourself show called: *"Spider-Man TV Theatre with the Hulk!"*

☐ **THE HULK #26** — A rare glimpse into Banner's past, as ol' Greenskin rips it up in Times Square and at a rustic upstate ashram!

☐ **EPIC #5** — ***Now bi-monthly,*** Epic begins its second great year with contributions by the *Brothers Hildebrandt, Robert E. Howard, Roy Thomas, Jim Starlin, Rick Veitch, Charles Vess, Tim Conrad* and many more. Truly, *the* Visual Odyssey!

☐ **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #63** — "Moat of Blood!"

MINUTEMEN

Sy13nt
Bob